

# IMPACT

A H A R D C O R E F A N Z I N E

ISSUE #1: CAN'T GET AWAY FROM THE PAST



SPORTSWEAR-HANDTIED-OVERTHELINE-FLOORPUNCH-RAINONTHEPARADE-AUTOMATIC-PURPOSE-RANCOR  
DOUBLEDECKERRECORDS-SWEETPETE-FREDHAMMER-CHRISZUSI-JIMPORCELLY-PHOTOS-FLYERS-STORIES-JOURNALS



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...all the bands included on the following pages are those  
we forgot... you are the reason this is possible!  
...running like thickets, face the enemy AND THE FIRST STEP (y'all!)  
for inspiring our actions and creating a more promising  
future for hardcore.

HARDCORE: NOTHING CAN  
COMPARE!

#### A Statement Of Purpose:

This fanzine is in your hands because it serves as a reminder of an era in hardcore which defined much of who we are today. "IMPACT: Online Hardcore Fanzine," for those who remember, probably should have become a print fanzine. Some five years later, when looking back upon this era, we feel that there wasn't one specific fanzine to completely sum up this era as we saw it. Though this print version of IMPACT by no means is a complete summary of hardcore in the later 90's, it is instead a culmination of what hit us the hardest throughout those few years. People often talk about the early 80's and the late 80's as an untouchable era... While we feel the same, this era is what we were able to witness firsthand. Many of you did as well, and yet, an even greater number did not. This fanzine serves as a reminder... to those of you who cared... a snapshot of what hardcore was for a short moment in time. While flipping through these pages... read, learn, or remember... perhaps, even relive, if for only just a second.



# AND THIS FLAME WILL KEEP ON BURNING STRONG, AND I WILL CONTINUE TO SING THIS SONG, MY FEELINGS IN THE MUSIC AND THE WORDS ARE WRITTEN IN STONE, AND I KNOW I'M NOT SINGING THIS SONG ALONE. YOUTH OF TODAY '88

It's been a long time, nearly four years, since I last wrote anything publicly for the use of IMPACT. As my favorite bands started to break up in '98 or '99, my news section updates, record reviews, and interviews came few and far between. Before I knew it, there wasn't anything new coming out that I liked. Weekend road trips to shows were replaced by trips with my friends to high school football and basketball games, parties, and simply fucking things up in East Stroudsburg and whatever we found along the way. Many of my bonds made with people through hardcore took a back seat to the friendships I rekindled with long time cronies that I became even closer with in school. Not that I didn't value my friendships through hardcore, but e-mails and phone calls only go so far when good shows, bringing people together, just weren't happening.

Around this same time, 11th and 12th grade of high school, I got into weightlifting, cars, rap, classic rock, and even fell in love with a girl (of all things!). All the while, my records never went anywhere, my Rev/Schism/Wishingwell mix tape was always in my walkman, and ye old classic HC shirt was still regularly brought into attire. Still, many would have considered me to have been a "drop out."

Within days after graduating High School I was off to the cornfields of Penn State University Park to start summer classes. Stripped of most things that had always surrounded me, while trying to make sense of my existence in the no-mans-land of central Pennsylvania, a lot of things in my life changed. I broke up with my girlfriend, lost track of many old friends, turned into a nerd, occasionally experienced a "real" college party scene, and stopped being straight edge. Some people say that this shit happens when you go to school, that it's a transition period. For me, it most definitely was. A tough one at that. I was able to prioritize what mattered most in my life. I quickly realized that breaking off an incredible relationship with the girl of my dreams was the worst thing I could have done. I remembered who my real friends were. I learned that a big campus party scene wasn't my path to take, and that constantly shooting for a 4.0 GPA would only stressed me out. I realized that straight edge wasn't something I was anymore, though it's principles and discipline were still chained, unbelievably strong, to my soul. On top of all that change, I also questioned my feelings on hardcore. Without tons of new bands coming out to really create a stir within me, I forgot some of my past. Pete was always playing me something, and I could tell he was hoping I would get really fired up over something new (notice I do say new... the intensity of the classics never faded).

That "something" really hit the hardest this past winter, when three new bands created a real dent in my head. The First Step, Running Like Thieves, and Face The Enemy are three of the biggest reasons why you are holding this zine right now, as they re-kindled a flame within me that had been kept to a dull glow for far too long. Since then, some other new bands have gotten me fired up as well, and in the process, Pete and I have reflected endlessly on who we are today as hardcore kids, and what got us here.

This fanzine serves as a culmination of an era that got me into hardcore, sending shivers down my spine that I will endure for the rest of my life. I always thought IMPACT ONLINE should have become a print fanzine. Some four years later, here it is. Remembering my past has helped me to

remember why I am here today, and why so much other shit in life that I could have moved on to hasn't pulled me away from hardcore. Say whatever the fuck you want about me, about us, about this zine, about hardcore... If it wasn't for what's contained within these pages, if it wasn't for a chance to look back on this era, these bands, these people, this music... I wouldn't be who I am today—I could never forget that.

-Gordo

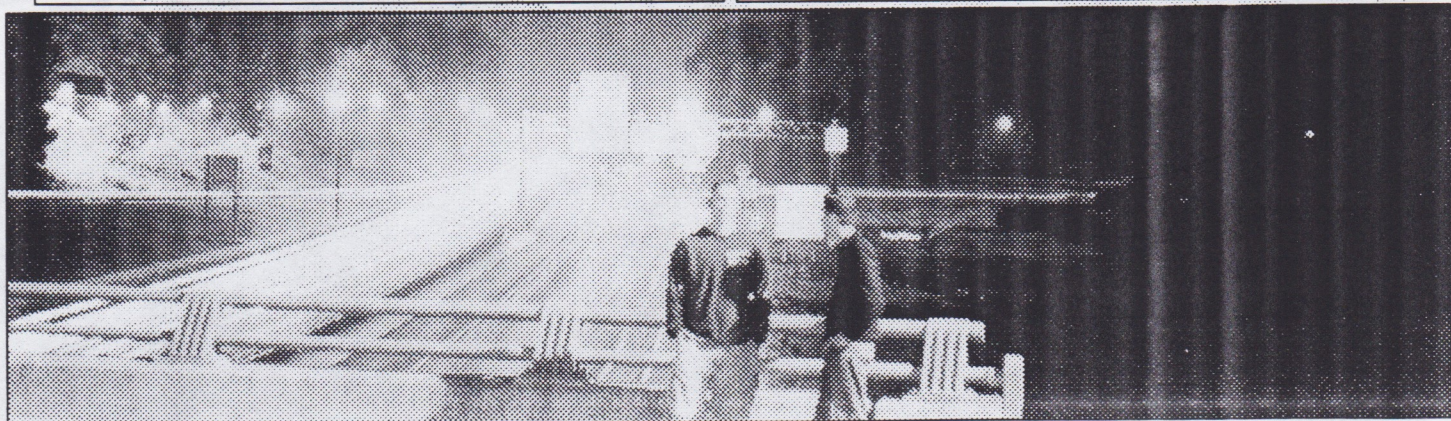
It seems like I'd been working on this zine forever... I remember, back in March of 2002, sorting through old material from IMPACT ONLINE and FINISH LINE FANZINE, hoping that somehow, with nothing more than a mess of photos, old interviews and a tired memory, that I'd end up half as far as this journey has taken me. Thinking back, I can recall my first experience with hardcore... sitting in a Graphic Design class with Gordo, and others that have since strayed from this path, admiring demo layouts, designing stickers for our own bands, screen printing the classic bands' logos on any blank paper within reach... When I found that I had settled for mediocre grades in a less than mediocre class, I realized how my attention had strayed from things I took for granted, to something completely uncontrollable.

Nearly six years later, I look back now and wonder where it's all gone. Stumbling over the smallest of things, I dread the memory of days gone by... the minor goals I had set for myself which, when looked upon collectively, pile high, leaving me little room to breathe. And then, as this project came to an end, I realized that what really mattered most, the truly important accomplishments, were the ones I had overlooked... The fact that I had committed myself to a new set of morals, dedicated myself to a universal vision, took pride in something which, for its own sake, brings about no glory... These are the true accomplishments in my life. These are the reasons I can hold my head high. These are the reasons I will never settle for anything less than the best of everything... Even now, looking at the problems surrounding my life, I can still take solace in all that hardcore, the people, the music, the words, have meant to me. And for this I'm grateful, because I'll never truly walk alone.

I'm sure some of you may read this and think, "Well, you wrote about three paragraphs in the zine, how could it mean that much?" but the truth is, despite taking care of nearly all the layout and design aspects of the following pages, I know what part I am destined to play... My attempt to fill these pages alone would have been like singing the lyrics to a cover song written by someone at the show, when I could have easily handed them the mic... I'm eternally in debt to Gordo for introducing me to something I can honestly say I will cherish until my last breath. And while I attended many of the shows he speaks of, saw many of the same bands, and experienced most of the same people he describes, I could never shout his words while he stands among the crowd, but I know I'll be up front singing along with all my strength. And that is what this zine and hardcore honestly mean to me... friendship.

Whether or not you come to enjoy IMPACT is entirely up to you... I made that decision, however, the day I realized I could give back, and I'd have been a fool not to. Take this for what it's worth, because for what it's worth, it's worth everything to me.

-Pete













**i won't sit back and play the role, i can't accept what it has become. i tried to look the other way, but i can't hold on to yesterday. you've warped what we had, built it up and watched it fall, now it hangs on by a thread. i won't forget what we had and what it meant. what it meant, i won't forget. you can change the face, but you can't touch what's in my heart and you can change the sound, but you can't tear this apart. you can't tear this apart. you can't tear this apart. you can't tear this apart.**

Mouthpiece. The single most important hardcore band throughout the 90's, yet they don't appear within these pages. Why? Though Mouthpiece was together when we got into hardcore, we got to be a much bigger part of Hands Tied and their counterparts than we did with Mouthpiece. Regardless, if it wasn't for that band, who knows where hardcore would have ended up. Legendary to say the least, Mouthpiece is just as much a reason for this fanzine existing as anything else. Minor Threat and SSD thanked bad rock records, YOT and Chain thanked Minor Threat and SSD, Mouthpiece thanked YOT and Chain. We, and hopefully the rest of the later 90's hardcore scene, have thanked Mouthpiece.

# mouthpiece







# PURPOSE

In all honesty, I feel like I only know about the first part of the history of this band. Purpose was a good example of a band that I wouldn't have liked nearly as much had I never seen them live or knew them personally. They certainly didn't fit the mold of what was coming out of the NJ "revival" scene around that time period and I don't think they were ever really thrilled about being lumped in with many of their counterparts as they started getting established. Still, Purpose brought something a little different to the table. When a lot of bands were attempting Judge covers and never looking beyond New York HC from 1988, these kids were belting out Skewbald covers and talking incessantly about the early Dischord catalog. For being only a year or two older than me, I couldn't believe at the time how much talent each one of them possessed as musicians. Unfortunately, they always seemed to be one step ahead of their latest release... their live performances showcasing a mix of brand new songs, variations implemented into old songs, and a constant progression that was void of "GOs!" and mosh breaks. Though the first two seven inches were decent and respectable releases, I knew that their LP would be the record to really push them closer to the top. However, it seemed that this record took a long time to come out, and when it finally did, the same thing had happened: what Purpose was doing live at the time seemed noticeably ahead of what was on the record. From here out, I really can't tell you a whole lot else about these guys. I thought they went a little "weird" to tell you the truth, a combination of branching into different branches of "the scene," as well as maybe some ego inflation among certain members. Whatever it was, my interest for them dwindled significantly. I still remember seeing them play for the first time, and within seconds, knowing that I wanted to interview Anthony for IMPACT ONLINE. Any band that can get Dave from Vision to read an excerpt from The Grapes Of Wrath, put it on a record, and have it sound good is cool in my book. For a while, I thought that of Purpose...

This interview was originally done March 1997.

**To start off, how/when/why did Purpose begin, what member changes have there been, who is in the band now, etc?**

We started the band in late 1994. It was pretty much John (vocals), Brian (drums), and I (guitar). We just jammed a lot, and it started to get serious when we got a permanent bass player, Jody Suozzo, and another guitarist, Cary Stickle, in the spring of 1995. The main reason we started the band was to have fun, and it went from there. Eventually, Cary left the band because he was too old, and Jody left because we all ended up hating him. We searched for a new bass player for about 2 weeks after Jody left, and found Mike. He was into older hardcore like Minor Threat and Teen Idles, and had a lot of experience on bass. We got rid of most of the songs we wrote with the other guys and started fresh. Purpose, as it is now, officially started in June of 1996. We played our first show like that on October 11th, 1996 with Rad.

**You just released a 7" on Reaction Records, what is it comprised of, and was there anything available before that?**

The 7" is the first official release by Purpose. I guess I mean it's the first thing that we have been eager to sell. We made a really horrible excuse for a demo on Mike's 4-track, and it pretty much gave a lot of people a bad impression about us. The demo was recorded like 3 weeks after we got Mike, so we weren't even that tight as a band yet. We recorded the 7" in December of 1996. It contains 3 new songs, and one song that we wrote long ago. We have no desire to be affiliated at all with Reaction Records. Our ex-bass player produced the record and we have mixed feelings about him and his ideals.

**What's the deal with the 7"s, because I know that you guys kind of got screwed over with the prices and everything?**

The main thing was that we all agreed that the records would be \$3.00, or \$3.50, before they were even pressed. Then he got them all packaged and they looked really good, so he thought he could make some money off of them by jacking them up to \$4. Being so excited about having the record, we didn't think much more about the price until it was time to sell. We wanted to sell them for what we had originally agreed on. He got all pissed and things have been sour ever since.

**When I listen to you guys, I hear a lot of different influences. What are they exactly, and what does everyone in the band listen to?**

We are influenced by a lot of stuff. Some bands that I know we all like are Chain of Strength, Minor Threat, Four Walls Falling, Statue, GB, YOT (we all worship the s/t 7"), Dag Nasty, Youth Brigade, and other youth-style, upbeat stuff. There is a heavy 2nd generation Dischord influence also. Bands like Rites of Spring and Embrace have a great influence on us.

**What are some of the lyrics about, and what inspires them?**

That's John's area. He channels a lot of the personal aspects of his life into his lyrics. We all agree on all of the stuff he writes. They range from how he sees the interaction of people, our friends, and mis-justices in society.

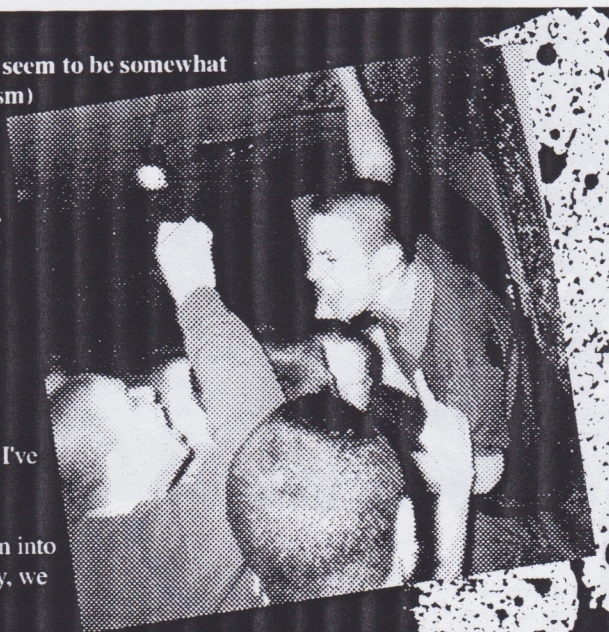


**You are all straight edge, what other types of things that seem to be somewhat "popular" in the HC (religion, anti-religion, vegetarianism) do you as a band pertain to?**

We are all straight edge. We can all X our hands at shows. Most of the time we forget to. That was one of our priorities with the band; to have an all straight edge line up. It's easier to stay focused that way, and it gives the band a common ground of belief.

**Being that you are all pretty young, how long have you been into HC?**

I'm 16, Mike is 18, Brian is 16 (17 in april), and John is 17. I've been listening to hardcore since i was 12. I started off with Fugazi, which led to Minor Threat and NYC stuff. Then I broadened my horizons to other forms of HC. We've all been into it for about 4 years. We're all still in high school, and luckily, we all go to the same school.

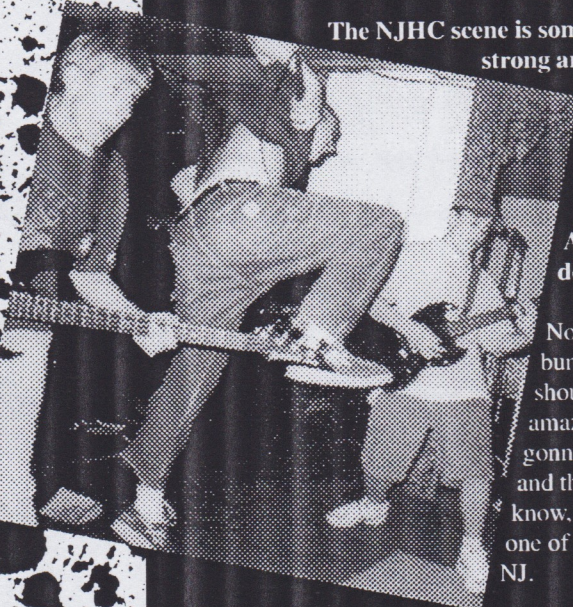


**The NJHC scene is something that I totally admire, due to the fact that it is so strong and you kids really know what it's about. Are you happy with it?**

It rules. We went down to DC to see SOIA and Ensign, and I must tell you... the NJ scene blows it away.

**Are you part of the MCYC? And for those reading who don't know what it is, please fill them in on it.**

No. None of us live in Morris County. They are a great bunch of kids, very supportive and really helpful. Everyone should watch out for Common Ground NJ. They are an amazing band and once they get that record out everyone is gonna go apeshit over them. They rule, they're all great guys, and they are really talented. Oh yeah, for those of you who don't know, the MCYC is the Morris County Youth Crew. They have one of the most united, most positive group of hardcore kids in NJ.

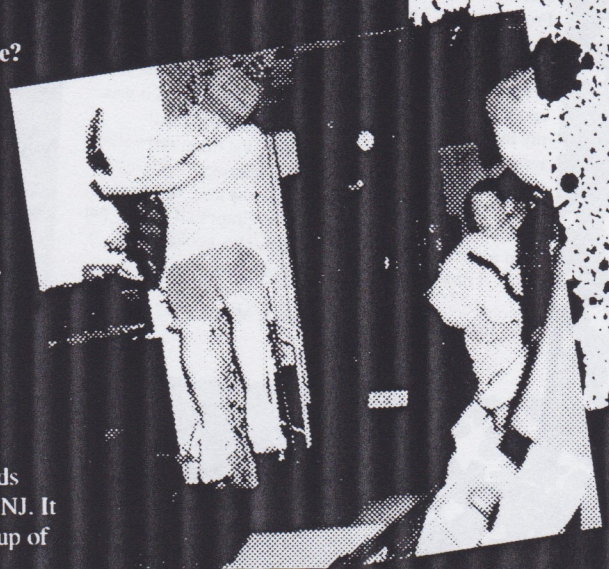


**Who are your favorite bands to play with, and to see live?**

Hands Tied, Uprise, Rad, Common Ground NJ, and Rain On The Parade were the coolest bands to play with so far. They are all great bands and all deserve so much attention. It's the coolest feeling playing with a band that you admire so much and listen to. The best bands to see live are all the ones I just mentioned, Ignite, Sick of it All, Shelter, Vision, Ensign, By the Grace of God, and a whole bunch of others that I can't think of.

**What was the best show that you've played so far, and why?**

New Providence American Legion on March 8th with Hands Tied, Rain On The Parade, 97A, Uprise, Common Ground NJ. It was the best because it was so much fun. We had a big group of kids singing along, and dancing, and that's all that matters.



**If someone was just getting into hardcore, and wanted to know what it sounded like, what record would you let them listen to, and why would you choose that record?**



# NEGLECT IS FORCING US THROUGH THE CRACKS



# WE HAVE TO GAIN CONTROL!

I'd probably give them "Call On My Brothers" by Ignite. It's produced so well and is such an easily grippable form of hardcore for a newcomer to get into.

**What's something that you feel needs to be changed in the hardcore scene right now?**

People need to accept people for who they are, and not the way they dress or look like. Also, people should give less attention to just their "favorite" bands, and more attention to all the bands. I've seen kids go to shows for just one band, and then leave. That's not right. That's not very supportive of the hardcore scene.

**If you could see 5 bands past or present play, who would you choose?**

Minor Threat. Chain of Strength, Rites of Spring, Faith and Four Walls Falling.

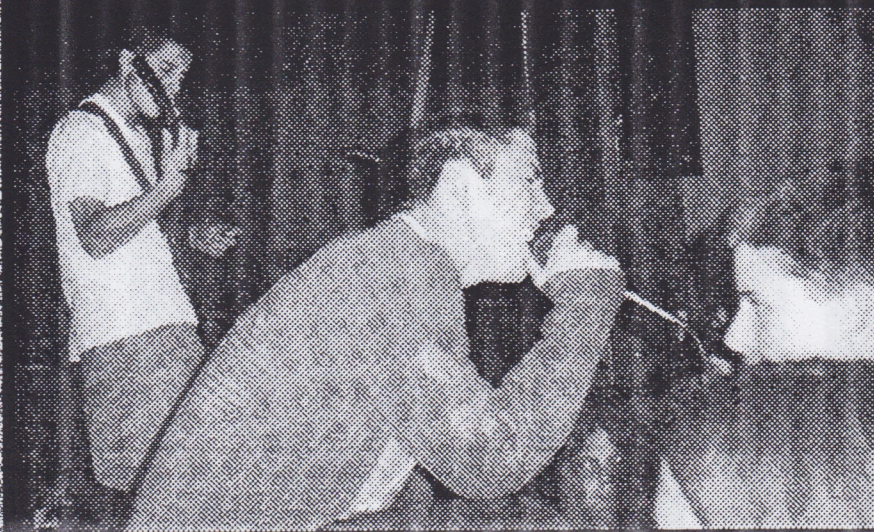
**How much do you want to accomplish with Purpose?**

I want to have as much fun as possible and put out enough records so everyone knows the words and can sing along. Future plans? We plan on touring from Boston to Virginia beach in August, and recording another 7" towards the end of April.

**That's about it, any final words or people you would like to thank?**

Thanks a lot for letting me do this thing. I'd like to thank a few people: all of our friends, Common Ground NJ, Rad, Uprise, No Contest, Hands Tied, Rain On the Parade, the MCYC, WVCH, Chris from Inflict, Cavan for hooking us up with a PA, Chris B, Matt C, Bill J, Seth B, Ed, Scott, Dan W, Amanda, Hardrock Henderson, Tom, Mike F, Brandon, Tucker, Aaron L for online exposure, Courtney, and all the kids who make positive contributions to the worldwide hardcore scene.

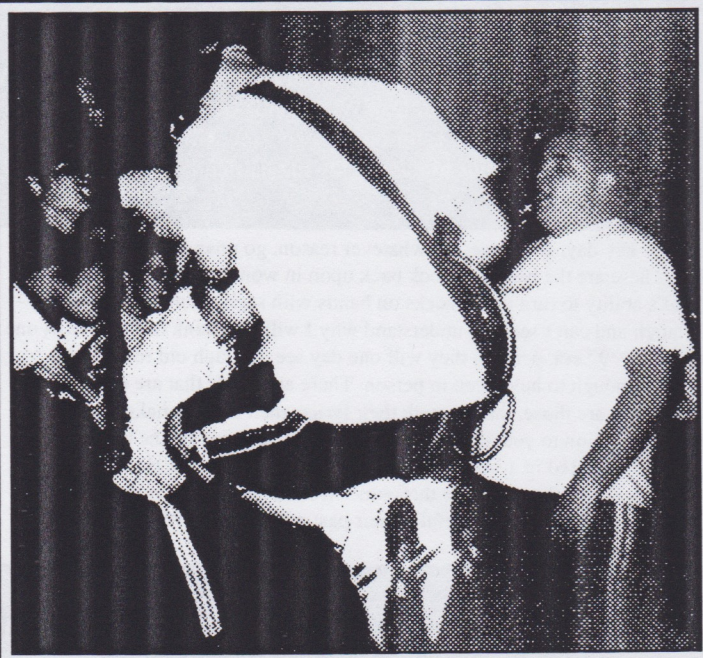
Some bands see their hey day, and some, for whatever reason, go unappreciated until long after their demise. These are the bands we look back upon in wonderment, utterly baffled at the underground's ability to turn their cheeks on bands with such talent and integrity. And while most laugh and can't seem to understand why I will still think of Purpose as one of the best bands of the '97 era, perhaps they will one day see, through old recordings, what I've been lucky enough to have seen in person. There are bands that are instantly legendary and then there are those, that through their lyrics, their music, make an indescribable personal connection to you, despite the feeling that you may be the only one... The 40 or so kids who gathered in a small garage, known as "The Heckle House," late one afternoon during June of 2001 know where this comes from... As Gordo said, they were always one step ahead of themselves, hopefully their past will catch up with all those who missed this band, one day. -Pete





# FLOOR

This interview was originally done by Brian Meryweather for Finish Line Fanzine. It was conducted on July 23, 1998, over the phone, with Mark Porter.



# NJ

When is the new LP coming out?

We're shooting for the end of September or early October.

You recorded it twice, right?

No.

I have a copy of it and it's really, really bad quality...

Oh, that was just a demo we did to see what songs we were into and what songs we weren't into.

How many songs are going to be on the new LP when it comes out?

Umm, I believe sixteen. Three old and thirteen new.

Is it more difficult to do band stuff with Zev in Endeavor, Zusi in The Judas Factor and you living in New York City now?

Well, Chris Zusi is now out of The Judas Factor. But yeah, it's difficult... It's a pain in the ass getting home from practice. And Zev has a show with Endeavor coming up next Friday and Floorpunch has a show also, so I'm not sure what we're going to do yet, but we'll work around it. We just try to deal with it, I'll take the train home from practice and we find ways to deal with everything, we're all pretty easy going.

What do you think of the hardcore scene now, as compared to when you put out the demo? When you put out the demo there were only a hand full of bands with a similar style.

I think it's improved a lot, but on



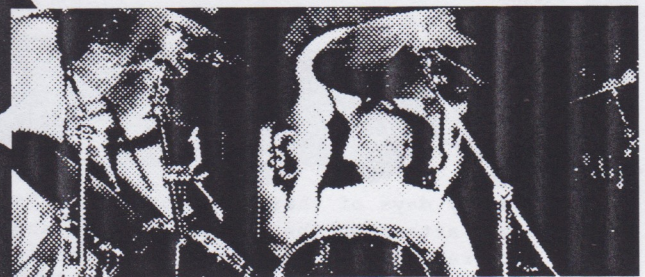
# PUNCH

the other side of the coin, it sucks to see a lot of bands playing the same stuff. We didn't intend to have everyone playing the same kind of music. Originality is good, but I have to say it's better than when we started out with the demo. I've been having a lot more fun at shows now than I did then.

I'd like to ask about the incident with Duncan Barlow (By the Grace of God), even though it happened it over half a year ago. People are still talking about it and some people seem to have mixed up stories, and I'd like to know what really happened...

Well, in the Punk Planet interview, this pretty much sums it all up. He says that even to this day he doesn't even know if Floorpunch is homophobic. That's just my point. He ran around telling everyone how I was a Nazi, how I was homophobic and that people should boycott my band and people should protest me. But, he never even came up and talked to me. I thought the time for talking was over... shut 'em up, ya' know? I think my actions were a really stupid way to prove a point. I've been going to shows for a long time, I'm not a fighter, I've never been a fighter at shows. I just thought that kid had been getting away with talking for a little too long. If he were to come up to me and talk to me, it would have been a different story. But, he decided to run his mouth to kids all over the country before he would have come and talk to me.

Do you think if you had the chance again you would handle things differently?



## ALWAYS

ALL US KIDS, ALL OUR STORIES. WE COME TOGETHER FOR THE GLORY. EVERY KID MY FRIEND, EVERY KID MY BROTHER. PICK YOU UP WHEN YOU FALL, HELP YOU OUT WHEN YOUR BACK IS TO THE WALL. IT FLOWS IN OUR HEART AND IN OUR VEINS. THIS POSITIVE YOUTH WILL ALWAYS REMAIN.



Yeah, definitely... My emotions got the best of me. It's hard to say, I wouldn't want to have to do that again. It's not a smart thing to do.

Do you guys have any plans for a U.S. or European tour?

Yeah, in the fall I'm going to try to get two months off work. We're going to try to go all over.

In the U.S.?

I think the U.S. and Europe.

I wanted to know how you felt about people spending \$80 on the gold vinyl 7"?

I think it's funny. What can you think? Honestly, we didn't make it like that. We pressed 88 of them just for our friends, and we had a list of who got what. Brett Beach, who put it out, has a list of who originally had what number. I know in Europe kids were offering \$175 for it and that's just crazy. Especially for our record.

I read somewhere that someone said that if a member of Floorpunch was to quit that you guys would break up, rather than finding a replacement? Do you still feel the same way now?

That was pretty much the deal. If someone couldn't play a show, we would try and find a replacement. But, if someone was to totally leave the band, we would probably just call it quits.

That's about it... Anything else to add?

Uhm... We're going to start playing shows a lot more in the fall. We haven't played Jersey in a while. When our record comes out, we're going to start playing more shows.

From the early days of their existence in 1995, to the final mosh in 2000, Floorpunch went out on a take-no-prisoners attack on the hardcore scene (and maybe even more specifically, the straight edge hardcore scene). On record, the New Jersey Crew wasn't out to kiss ass and blend in with the flock of "hardcore" bands of the time. Live, this was magnified even more so. If you were at a Floorpunch show and were watching them, you either loved them or hated them. I figured I would write a little bit about each Floorpunch show I got to see, almost all of which were great. Though I feel fortunate enough to have gotten to see these guys play this many times, there were still some amazing shows I couldn't get to, usually because I was too young to drive and couldn't find a ride. Trust me, I'm not too happy about this either. But what I did get to see left many, many pictures in my memory of what hardcore shows are all about.

9/15/96 - Scarlet O'Hara's - Bethlehem, Pa  
Hands Tied/Rancor/Atari/97a/Ten Yard Fight

To this day, a show that I still have trouble finding fault with. This Sunday afternoon show only 40 minutes from my house, did more to define my feelings on hardcore than probably any other show I've seen. By the time FP went on (last), I had no voice, eardrums that felt like a war had been waged upon, a Judge shirt with a neck stretched out to the size of my torso, and only enough energy to breathe and blink. So when FP busted into their set and a wave of clenched fists and flailing elbows swept over the dance floor, I just took it all in from the left side of the stage. It was at this point I realized that every zine I had read saying Porter was a big fuckin' dude wasn't kidding. They covered Cro-Mags' "It's The Limit" and Porter said that "if you don't know this song, then just get the fuck out." It was followed up by thirty seconds of non-stop stage diving, and then a solid minute of blood-boiling singalongs with non-stop floorpunching by countless kids clad in Judge Schism and YOT 88 Tour shirts. And don't forget the fatigues. I had liked the Cro-Mags a lot before that. To say that I liked them even more

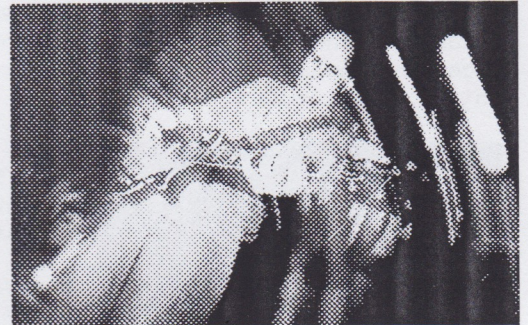


afterwards is a ridiculous understatement. After their set I asked Porter if they had any t-shirts, and was expecting him to tell me to fuck off (hey, this guy was 4 times the size of me and minutes ago, on stage, he looked like he would enjoy making someone his bitch). Instead, he apologized and said that they left quickly from NJ and didn't bring anything with them, but that at the next show they would have stuff for sure. So maybe no shirt, but I didn't need anything after that show, or their set for that matter.

**4/27/97 - The Wetlands - NYC**

**In My Eyes/Strife/Comin' Correct/Warzone/Better Than A Thousand**

You are in fact reading this correctly; it wasn't until seven months later that I got to see FP for the second time. That whole winter they seemed to not play in NJ or anywhere real close to me that I could bum a ride to. So this day I had a lot of making up to do. This was my first show ever in New York City, and that was a great experience all in itself. Just walking around St. Marks and the Village, passing hardcore kids here and there, even seeing Porcell riding his bike towards the Wetlands were cool things that made my day even before the show. Floorpunch had almost the entire state of New Jersey here to see them today, and it showed on the first chords. Porter was in full-effect with his college football jersey, and the rest of the guys looked right at home in NYC. I forget if they covered anything, but I just remember Bill almost smacking me in the face with his guitar head on accident as I ran by him once to dive. The photo of Porter inside the "Twin Killing" LP is from this show, and I am the one who looks like he is trying to pick Porter's nose. I had a video of this at one time but I don't know where it is today. Definitely a re-confirmation that what I had seen in Bethlehem the previous fall was no joke.

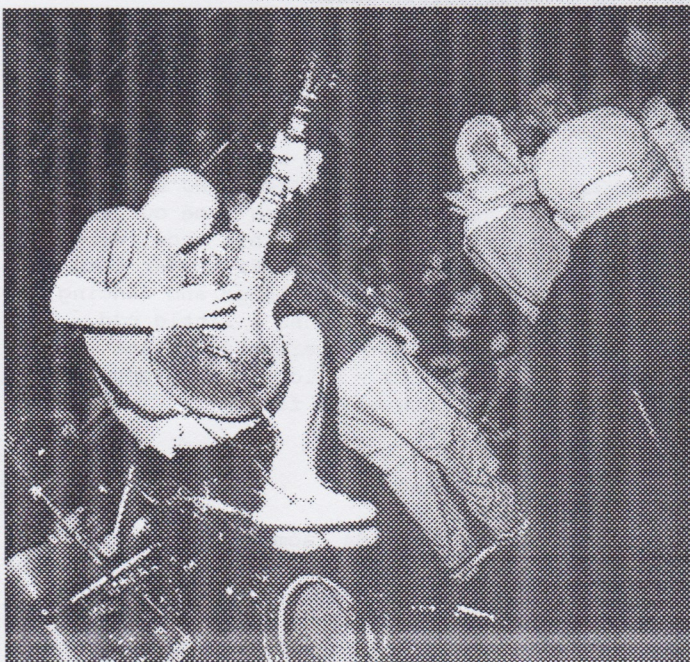


**6/7/97 - Princeton Arts Council - Princeton, NJ**

**Rad/Last Straw/97a/Ensign/Breakdown**

Walking into the Arts Council that afternoon and taking one look at the stage, I knew that regardless of what went down hours later, many a dive would occur when Floorpunch got up there. This was also the first show that the seven inch on red was available for sale, and I was sure to grab it. Only later that evening, would Dan Horner scam me out of it, and even today I still haven't gotten another one. Ensign had a big reaction at this show, and I had this feeling that Porter, Zusi, Bill, Kingshott, and Little Dave (who was filling in for Zev at this show) just watching and whispering to each other, "Yo, let's just open our set up and play the hardest fucking intro we can." Well, the intro was Leeway's "Rise and Fall," which sent the entire city of Princeton into a brutal mosh that even the guys from Breakdown might have gotten in on. The rest of the set followed much of the same formula, with equal amounts of diving and singalongs to round things out. The only person who might not have moved was Zusi's 12-year old cousin, who watched from the side, pondering just what the fuck his elder relative was partaking in. A mid-set cover of Negative Approach's "Ready To Fight" was also included, with guest vocals from Geoff Sayreville. A half an hour later, they were all on the dance floor, getting down to "Sick People."

**8/3/97 - Manville Elks Lodge - Manville, NJ - Stretch Armstrong/Purpose/Uprise/Vision/25 Ta Life**



Being more of a diver than a moshers, I was always a little bummed that this place didn't have a bigger stage. This show brought in a diverse mix of kids, and it seemed that some NYC-style thug life was looking to control the tempo of the dance floor during every band. There were dudes windmilling to Purpose... I don't even know if gentle slow dancing coincided with Purpose's music, let alone windmills. Soon into FP's set, you could see a clash of styles. There was the normal, traditional HC-style of dancing going on, mostly by kids who all knew one another, but then there was also kickboxing, quantum jujitsu, and ishinryu karate as demonstrated by many clad in 25 Ta Life and Crown Of Thornz t-shirts. Things stayed cool as FP kept things busy, playing a few newer songs that Porter said would be on a new LP on Equal Vision. A blazing cover of Cro-Mags' "It's The Limit" was thrown in, and Geoff Sayreville lended a hand with the last verse. I think it was at the end of this song that sure enough, a fight broke out on the dance floor in which Little Dave was found in the middle of (with a knife?). Shit seemed regulated rather quickly, and little schism prevailed. Another victory for The Punch.



8/24/97 - The Gate - Stroudsburg, Pa

Atari/Saves The Day/Purpose/Rain On The Parade/Rancor/Hands Tied

I put this show on at a small club near my house, and it was a pretty big deal for me at the time. I still don't know how I managed to get things to run smoothly, even though the stage was non-existent and the PA was for hunger. To this day, I am also still bummed that I put together my idea of a perfect show with the bands I wanted to see, yet I had to stand around on crutches due to a broken toe, complete with a small plate and two metal pins in it. Not many people really went off until Rain On The Parade, who got a big sing along reaction. But FP definitely got people moving after that. The opened with an intro that up until that show, I hadn't heard, and later became the beginning of "Change Of Heart." Probably the coolest thing of their set was in the opening of "No Exceptions," where about 6 kids on each side of the dance floor (if you could call it that), went back and forth in an almost synchronized mosh. The classic "It's The Limit" was also thrown in mid-set and received the appropriate reaction (though I'm sure many were thinking 'murder'). Someone managed to find pillows that were laying around on couches in the back of the club, and these soon were thrown into the mix, as people were getting hit with them left and right for a bit. Definitely a first for that. At the end of their set, Rancor jumped on and did a few songs, ending with "I Won't Take Part," complete with a pile-on in the middle of the dance floor. Hands Tied then followed things up appropriately with their first real show back after a lengthy hiatus. I couldn't believe how many people traveled a pretty decent distance to come see some bands play in a shitty little club that some 15-year old kid organized. I went home that night realizing how cool to it was that in HC, such a thing was possible.



12/14/97 - 180 Degrees Club - Hagerstown, MD

Strength Of Reason/For The Living/Longshot/Atari/Rancor/Fastbreak/Rain On The Parade/Ensign/Bane/Ten Yard Fight

This was a really big show that I almost didn't make it to. I had to really scramble to find a ride and miss a big test in school the next day, but it was well worth it. Though FP played a great, hard set, I didn't really go off at this show for them. I had been diving and singing along left and right for Atari, Rancor, Fastbreak, and ROTP, so when FP took the stage I needed a little bit of a breather. They opened with "Turn Away," which I hadn't heard before. Needless to say, if you know how that song opens, you can imagine how hard people were going off. That night it sounded ten times harder than it does on the LP, and people were just getting clobbered. Up until that afternoon, I had never seen a FP show as brutal as that one. The monitors were in front of the stage on each side, and they would periodically be almost knocked over before 5 people on the other side would try to hold them up. They closed with "It's The Limit," though, by that time, most people were worn out from a near thirty-minute mosh marathon. I could have only imagined if they opened with it. Then everyone's patience would have been tested to see what they knew.

3/6/98 - New Providence American Legion Hall - New Providence, NJ  
CC4J/Reach The Sky/Fastbreak/In My Eyes/OS101/Vision

Even though this place was an American Legion Hall with a very low stage, I never saw a bad show here, and this night proved no different. When I walked in at 6:30, I was shocked at how many kids there were here. People had told me that a little bit of a scene had developed in this town, but there were easily 150 new faces when I walked in. Every band got a big reaction, and I was only left to think about how insane things would have been with a bigger stage. By the time FP played, everyone was ready to fuck things up. Very appropriately, NJ's hardest opened with the Leeway "Rise And Fall" intro, and people WENT OFF. A lot of older dudes came out to see CC4J (originally, "United Front" in the late 80's), who had gotten back together for this show (were they gonna play or do more?). So, many older dudes were right up front for FP, and going off harder than anyone. The Punch were really tight at this show, and there was a good mix of singalongs and dancing, as well as whatever type of diving was possible. They covered "No Thanks," which I found a little odd. Of course there was the straight edge connection, but I never knew that the FP guys were big UC fans. It was cool to hear them do it because they really beefed up the sound and it ripped. A lot of new songs were also thrown in the mix, and were no let down. Another huge FP show with nothing to fault.

4/25/98 - Philly YWCA - Philadelphia, Pa

Reach The Sky/Kid Dynamite/The Judas Factor/Floorpunch/Better Than A Thousand

The recipe for a good show: a good size place with a great stage, tons of kids, some good opening bands, a strong headliner, and the proper promotion. Robby Redcheeks followed that recipe to a "T" (as he often did and still does), and this show was no let down. I did nothing more than occasionally tap my foot up until FP took the stage, so I was ready to bust when they opened up with "My Path" and went right into the Intro Bust from the demo. I still don't think there was a better way for FP to open up a set.



If you were anywhere within 20 feet of the stage, you really weren't safe at this one. If you weren't getting nailed by fists and elbows, you were being used as a landing pad for a front flip off the stage. So, you could either stand in the back or go off twice as hard. I chose to use the stage to it's full potential. I was watching Zusi go off on guitar, and I couldn't understand what he got out of playing with The Judas Factor (who played right before FP), when he didn't even move with them. In FP, it was a different story, and like the other four members in the FP posse, he looked charged. The top right photo in the lyric sheet of the "Fast Times..." LP was from this show, even though the photo doesn't do the live intensity justice. Of course, "It's The Limit" was thrown in mid-set, and everyone just got punished. I had been pumped for Better Than A Thousand as well, but FP's set proved to be no comparison. Fucking Floorpunch.

**5/15/98 - Casino Skatepark - Asbury Park, NJ**  
**Full Speed Ahead/Ensign/Fastbreak/Breakdown**

This show just proves how awesome my parents are, as they drove me and ex-Impact Crew member Brian Meryweather the two and a half hour distance when we realized we had no ride down and my car was being repaired. A lot of NJ kids came out for this show, and it was definitely a cool sight to see dozens of hardcore kids hanging out and skating at the Casino that night. I had never been down here before this night, so I wasn't sure what to expect of the place. The stage was pretty small, but there was adequate room to move around, while ensuring that a pile-on wasn't too far away. Next to the stage area were all the ramps. It was a really cool set up. Floorpunch ended up playing second, right after Full Speed Ahead, because Fastbreak wasn't there yet. The Jersey Shore wasted no time fucking things up, as FP opened with "Not For Me," and then going right into the new, Atlantic City mosh song, "Let It Ride." They played a lot of new songs as well like "Holding On" and "The Answer." Only a few days before this show, I had gotten a dub of the rough recording they did for the upcoming



"Fast Times..." LP. The recording was raw, hard, and void of any polish. Apparently, a lot of other kids had a dub too, because I wasn't the only one singing along to the new songs. I think Timmy Bladecrasher might have spent more time on top of the crowd than he did in it, as he was constantly climbing on top of someone during all the singalongs. The middle right photo of the LP lyric sheet was taken here, and the middle left photo might have been from this show as well. "It's The Limit" rocked the house as expected, and I think Geoff Sayreville might have actually decapitated someone during the breakdown. The set seemed short but lacked nothing, and my trip was complete. Ensign was next but couldn't hang with what I just saw. Then, Fastbreak ended up playing, and even turned up some noses, as there were many snickers from the crowd concerning why they were all dressed up. I thought it was pretty cool. We had told my parents to meet us at 11, and that time came towards the end of Fastbreak, so we were out, missing Breakdown. But as long as I got to see Floorpunch...

**8/1/98 - The Avalon - Newburgh, NY**  
**Strong Intention/Rain On The Parade/Reach The Sky/Blood For Blood**

I had been itching to see FP all summer, and it had seemed like they never played out. Finally this day came, the first of a stint they did with ROTP and Reach The Sky. I had had my license since the spring, but only recently got the go ahead from my 'rents to drive further distances. I was pretty psyched to find out that Newburgh was only about two hours from me, so it was a go. When I got to Newburgh with Pete and some of our other chums, we realized that not everyone else was so psyched about the show. The Avalon was a decent sized indoor skatepark with a really good stage, probably three feet high with plenty of room to move around. However, only some local head bangers and a few diehards made up the crowd, and things didn't look promising for a memorable show. Nobody even flinched during Strong Intention or ROTP, setting the tone. FLOORPUNCH changed things up a bit by opening with Cro-Mags' "By Myself," but even that didn't get people going. They proceeded to tear through old and new songs, but only a few clueless longhairs, a few 'core kids, and myself were the ones to even show some strand of emotion. I was pretty bummed, and it was definitely the worst crowd I had seen for a FP show. At least I knew the Alive and Well fest was coming up, and the conditions then would be a lot different.

**8/30/98 - Casino Skatepark - Asbury Park, NJ**  
**Full Speed Ahead/Kid Dynamite/Ensign/OS101/Vision/Breakdown/Burn**



This was the second day of the much hyped "Alive and Well" fest, and the first day wasn't nearly as cool as I had hoped, much due to it being at the Asbury Convention Center, complete with a huge barricade and bouncers. Today was a different story however, with the Casino being a much better place for a good HC show. Remembering Newburgh, I was ready to bust for FP, and that I did. They played second to last, following up great sets by Vision (Pete Tabbot's last show) and Breakdown. The Punch opened with the raging "The Hardway," by none other than Outburst, and then went straight into the demo Intro Bust, followed by "Always." Everyone else must have been dying to see them as well, because the Casino was exploding with every note. A good mix of stuff was played, though they actually left out any Mags covers. This set was much like the Casino one from a few months prior; only this time there were probably a hundred more people and even more energy in the joint. I was drained by the end of the set, and I had to leave then for the trek back home to get to the first day of 11th grade the next morning. I might have missed BURN, but after seeing FP, I had very little to complain about anyways.

**11/7/98 - The Bank - NYC**

**Saves The Day/In My Eyes/One King Down/Converge/Battery/Gameface/Shai Halud**

This was the REV/EVR showcase show, and FP was the main act drawing me into the city that afternoon. I ended up hanging outside most of the time, only really catching a solid In My Eyes set with some dude, I can't remember, filling in on guitar in place of Neil. After what felt like forever, FP finally busted things out, opening with "By Myself," which NYC was definitely in the mood for. The stage was great, and there were ample heads to land on. Additionally, there were just enough people going off to keep it fun, without there being too many people in your way. I think the "Fast Times..." LP had been released, and I remember a lot more people knowing the words to the new songs. The week before this, scumbag Chris Daley (One Sided War) had tried to jump me at a show, and I was hoping he would be here today, as many others were hoping as well (more people than just me wanted their turn on this kid). Lucky for him, he didn't show. The FP set might have been more fun than handing out a beating anyways.

**12/28/98 - Coney Island High - NYC**

**Dynamo/OS101/Fahrenheit 451/Underdog**

Maybe the most shocking thing about this show is that Antidote played a quick reunion set right after Dynamo, while I, along with many others, were outside. I guess there were some ties between Dynamo and some old NYC guys, one being a member of Antidote... I never really found out. That sucked. This was one show where I actually wasn't most psyched to see FP, as Underdog's previous reunion shows had proven to be nothing less than amazing. Still, I was eager to see FP again in NYC. I forget what they opened with, but they played both "It's The Limit," and "By Myself." A lot of thug life NYC kids tried to regulate the pit, and I remember even a few hard stares at times between them and some NJ diehards. A lot of people seemed to save their energy for Underdog, and this set was actually a little more tame than I was hoping for. Regardless, it was a great warm-up for Belmar's best.

**1/17/99 - The Melody - New Brunswick, NJ**

**Parting Shot/Fast Times/Embrace Today/Time Flies**

This was a pretty low-key show, as most Melody shows were, with only about 100 people there. Pete's old band, Parting Shot, opened up and rocked the house, with everyone there singing along, diving, and re-creating the cover of the "Way It Is" LP. Maybe not, but they played a good set. I wasn't into much else up until FP played, but even then nobody seemed too into it. There was often a feeling of lethargy in the air at the Melody, and today that was pretty prevalent. I took some photos and just kinda hung back, I don't even remember FP covering anything. I did however get a "Division One Champs" seven inch with the JUDGE cover at this show, due in part to the courtesy of Matt Summers. Little did I know, that soon FP would be hanging it up, and the next and last time I would see them would be a year and a half later.

**5/21/00 - CBGB - NYC**

**Cro-Mags**

This show really seems like a blur to me. It was an emotional day, knowing that only a couple of weeks later I would be leaving for college and that FP would never really exist again. That marked the breakup of yet another one of my favorite bands from an era that got me into HC, and I really questioned if I would be back to many shows seeing the same people anytime soon. It had even been a long time since I had seen a really good show, so a lot of old faces were here today. I don't even remember who opened, I was busy talking with a lot of people the entire time. FP tore things up as I knew they would, though I just took it all in from the left side of the stage. I can't recall what all they covered, though I think they left the Cro-Mags covers out tonight. Tons of people went off, and to this day I still think it might have been rougher during FP than it was for the Cro-Mags. I had a good time just watching the place erupt, hoping that between a song Porter would say that they are gonna keep playing out. Of course, he didn't, though FP still closed things up on the right note. After their set, all five members were found right up front for the Mags, going off like tons of others. More than five years after the idea first came about to do a band all about dancing, diving, and singing along, FP ended their run on this Sunday afternoon. When I walked out of CBGB that night, I knew that something good had ended that couldn't be replaced.





Gordo asked me to write a little something to go along with the piece he did on FP so here it goes... By now, any of you that are interested already know the basics about the band (history, members, releases, etc). We were around for almost 4 years... man, it's hard to believe we lasted that long. The main point behind us doing FP was to 1, do a band where we could do our best Jersey-fied NYHC and 2, have fun. I think we accomplished both of those things. We never set out to make a living off of the band or take it too seriously, we did it because we love hardcore-and at the time there wasn't all that much of, what I would call, hardcore around. Yes, our songs were straight forward, and we talked a lot of shit, take that however you want. If you actually cared enough to talk to us or ask us a question then you'll know where we were coming from. If you'd rather talk shit and try to prove how intelligent or clever you are by critiquing us, save your breath because we couldn't care less. The purpose of the band was to have fun and I bet if you took a poll, 9 out of 10 people at our shows had fun. That's what I'll remember the most about the band-playing shows. For whatever reason, it just worked. Whether it was the road trip to get there, me forgetting a cover song, Kingshott being Kingshott, or Porter's in-between song banter, it was always fun and always interesting. So I'm glad that's what Gordo's piece is concentrating on. Add to that the fact that we got to play with just about every band that we grew up loving... Cro-Mags, Murphy's Law, Agnostic Front, Breakdown, Warzone, Killing Time... I couldn't have asked for more. I don't know if I could pick a favorite show, there were too many to choose from. It seems like we must've played from Philly to Boston at least 100 times. Brett and I just tried to think of just the places we played in NJ-Princeton Arts Council, Middlesex, Obsessions, Leonardo VFW, Red Bank Lodge, Montclair St. College, Asbury Skate Park, Bordentown VFW, New Providence VFW, Chatham Church, The Melody in New Brunswick, The Saint in Asbury Park. I figure we played some of those places 3 or 4 times each, and it adds up. I could probably pick out something funny or cool that I remember from each of those places, but I'd rather look back on the experience as a whole rather than focus on any one moment or show (it's a lot easier on my already suspect memory that way). I want to thank all of the kids who supported the band over the years-we do appreciate it. Especially the FPC, you know who you are.

-Zusi

PS-Cro-Mags rule.





- Long hair.
- Belly flop stage dives... well, stage dives with no style-period.
- Coming drunk to a show, looking for a fight.
- Chris Daley, scumbag Canadian turned NYC scam artist.
- Flyers made completely in Microsoft Word.
- Confusing metal, emo, punk, thrash, or cock-rock for **HARDCORE**.
- Personal 'zines.
- Fender guitars and combo amps.
- Not liking **BOLD**.
- Victory Records.
- Black as the limited color of a vinyl press.
- Excessive limited presses, covers, colors, stamps, numberings, semen markings.
- Shows with no stage (and I did one, too).
- Wearing the shirt of a band you are seeing play.
- Suburban thug-life.

**...AND IS STILL LAME NOW.**

**SHIT THAT WAS LAME THEN...**

- Bands with numbers in their names (excluding 7Seconds, R87 & S714).
- Emo glasses.
- PDA (public displays of affection, morons) at shows.
- Inappropriate trade offers (ie, Victory Records Sampler CD for a CCME 7" on orange with batman stamp).
- No re-entry.
- Stage potatoes.
- Diving, dancing, or even standing up front with a book bag.
- Gimmick bands (ie, multiple singers, more than 2 guitarists and singing drummers).
- Newest Revelation releases (well, for the most part).
- Supposed "punks" or "hardcore kids" who don't own a turntable.
- Spell-checked fanzines (ie, Ray Capital and John Porcelain booth plaid in Tooth of Today).
- CD demos.
- A larger MP3 collection than record collection.



**...FORTUNATELY, THERE WILL ALWAYS BE THE CLASSICS.**



# FRED HAMMER

Fred Hammer is the first person I think of when west coast hardcore comes to mind, and of course, OXNARD. It's Alive Fanzine has been alive and kicking for well over a decade, and is one of the most basic, true to the roots HC 'zines still in existence. I wanted to see what Fred had to say, and I wasn't sure what he would put down on paper. Originally, I was thinking he would write something more on California/Oxnard HC in the late 90's. When I got his article in the mail, I noticed he went a different route. Regardless, it's a pretty good story from someone who probably has tons of them...

Ask any of my friends... I have the WORST memory...  
But here's a story that I pulled from my skull...

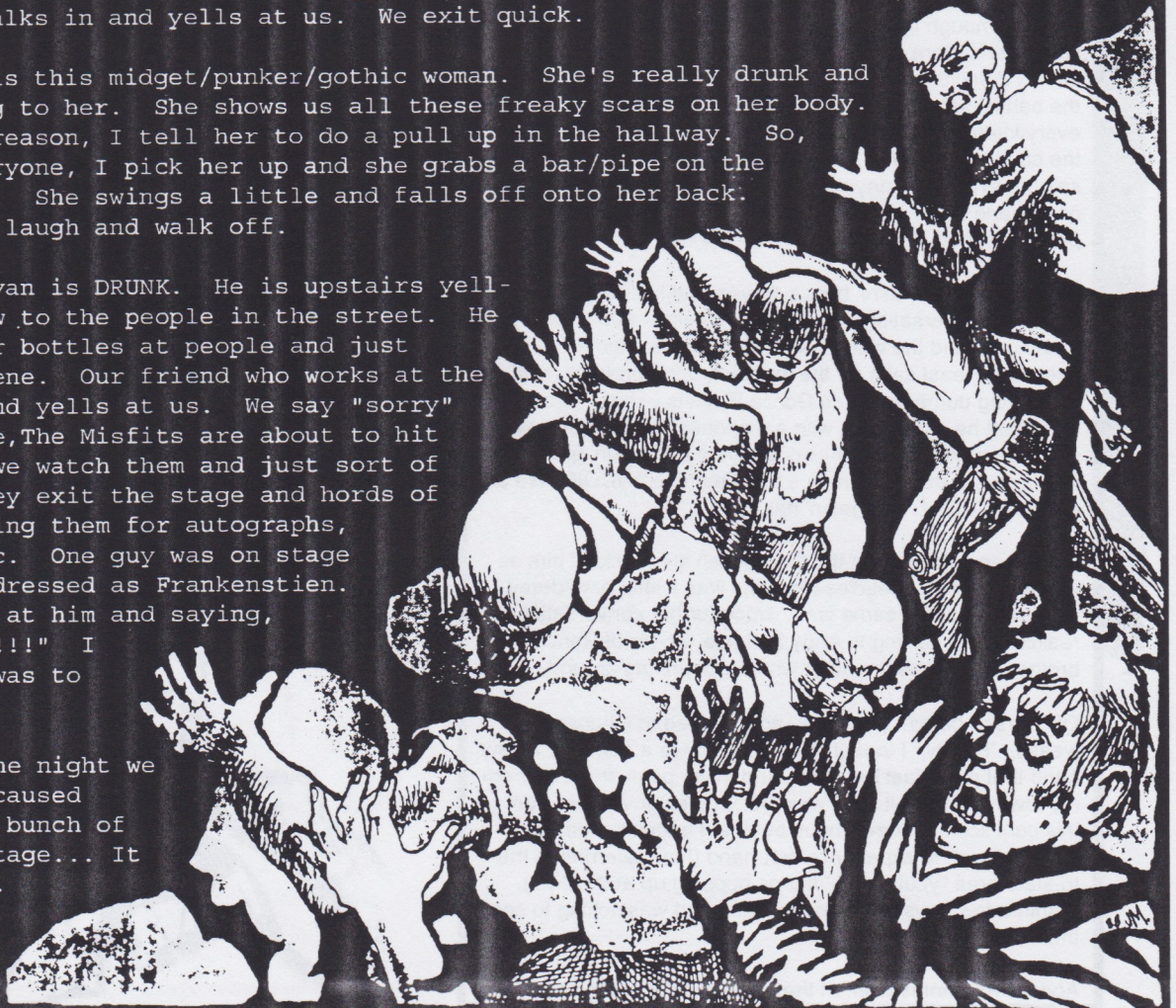
My friend Ryan Freddette and I went to go see The Misfits at this total rock club in Ventura, California. I somehow scammed my way onto the guest list a few days before. Of course, when we arrived... I was not on the guest list... DOH!!! I begged the lady working the door to believe me, so she lets Ryan and I in. I run into the roadie for INDECISION and he gets us backstage passes. Yahoo!!!

So we go backstage and we wander around for an hour or so. My friend Ryan LOVES to drink beer... So he finds some beer and starts drinking. By this time the backstage was crowded with posers, fans, kooks, punkers, etc. We find The Misfits dressing room and start going through all their food, clothes, etc. Ryan knocks over a huge tub of water/juice. Just then, someone walks in and yells at us. We exit quick.

In the hallway is this midget/punker/gothic woman. She's really drunk and we start talking to her. She shows us all these freaky scars on her body. Ouch. For some reason, I tell her to do a pull up in the hallway. So, in front of everyone, I pick her up and she grabs a bar/pipe on the ceiling...DOH!!! She swings a little and falls off onto her back. We just sort of laugh and walk off.

By this time, Ryan is DRUNK. He is upstairs yelling out a window to the people in the street. He is throwing beer bottles at people and just making a big scene. Our friend who works at the club comes up and yells at us. We say "sorry" and by this time, The Misfits are about to hit the stage. So we watch them and just sort of laugh. Then they exit the stage and hords of people are bugging them for autographs, photographs, etc. One guy was on stage the whole time dressed as Frankenstein. We keep yelling at him and saying, "GOOD JOB FRANK!!!" I don't think he was too happy with us.

By the end of the night we broke windows, caused fights, stole a bunch of shit from backstage... It was pretty cool.







# RANCOR

## "The Goofiest Bastards '97 Ever Saw"

I'm gonna tell you right now that this intro is gonna be longer than the actual interview. If you aren't interested in my nostalgic ramblings, then I would jump right to the interview...

A semi-local but popular HC/metal band named Turmoil played a show at the infamous club, Spanky's, in my hometown in March of 1996 (as well as numerous other times). Though the show sucked and only about 7 people were there, there were a couple goofballs running around in Gorilla Biscuits and Floorpunch t-shirts... and not just during the bands' sets, but between bands, outside the club, everywhere. I mean, literally, running around, jumping on the couches, throwing shit at people, funny stuff. I would seldom ever see many kids frequent this place wearing such great band shirts (at least at weak shows like this), and I was pretty psyched. "Youth Crew kids do exist!"

So I was trying to think how a 14 year-old kid like me could initiate a conversation with these goofballs that were busy running around the club. I went up to the one kid who seemed at least calm for the moment, and I probably said something dumb like "nice Gorilla Biscuits t-shirt." In a heartbeat he came back with a response along the lines of something like, "Yea thanks dude, they are fuckin' great! You wanna buy a demo!? I'm in a band man! RANCOR! We are all about JUDGE and gettin' naked!"

Right then, his friend in the Floorpunch shirt tackled him as we were talking. Needless to say, I was a little bewildered, yet amused at the same time. Upon further conversation, I realized I was talking to Andy Frobese, singer of Rancor. His brother Aaron was the other whackjob running around.

Of course I bought the demo, and listened to it nonstop for weeks. "Finally," I thought! I actually have a demo by a new band that plays fast hardcore, and these guys aren't far from my town! Now I felt like I was "in" ...these guys were from this cool scene I knew about, but that I hadn't yet gotten close enough to experience first-hand (I am referring to the tri-state area "youth crew" bands popping up at the time). Within a few days I knew every word and was itching to see them live.

About two months later, at the same club, Rancor was

scheduled to play with H2O (a fave of mine at the time), and Floorpunch (whose demo I still didn't have, but knew they would be amazing). I had my calendar marked. Upon arriving at the club, I found out that both Floorpunch and Rancor had cancelled. WHAT?!?! BUT I HAVE BEEN WAITING MONTHS!!! Here these two bands that I was ridiculously pumped to see were coming to my town, literally 2 minutes from my house, the youth crew, hooded sweatshirts, fatigues, Nike's, stagediving... all the things that I knew were synonymous with these bands, though I really hadn't gotten a full taste of it in person yet... AND THEY CANCELLED! Well, another band that I had heard of called Ten Yard Fight, somehow ended up on the bill, and in the end I still got a taste of what I expected in the first place. I walked out of that club at 2am knowing that if RANCOR or FLOORPUNCH were anything like TEN YARD FIGHT, then my life would never be the same. I was right.

I didn't actually get to see Rancor until the following fall at the FLOORPUNCH/HANDS TIED/97a/TEN YARD FIGHT/ATARI show at Scarlet's in Bethlehem, Pa. That show is another story in itself. Of course, Rancor was everything I had expected them to be at this show. Playing the demo, some new songs, and covering "True til Death" and "Straight Edge Revenge," Rancor (well, Jamie and Andy at least) was non-stop jumping, finger-pointing, fist-pumping straight edge hardcore. Seeing both Frobese brothers again re-confirmed my observation that they were some funny dudes.

Unfortunately, Rancor would continue to play out minimally as well as cancel many shows last minute for the rest of their lifespan. Still, their performances were always a good time. What they lacked in tightness or skill they made up for in comedy and energy. If I go any further than that you will have a book in front of you...

This interview was done with their drummer, Chris Kayes, around January of 1997 by myself over e-mail. At the time, I was pretty bummed that he gave such short responses, but I'm sure he was busy fending off bottle-rockets shooting forth from out of Andy's ass. What a band...





**Was anyone from RANCOR in any previous bands, and does anyone currently do any side projects?**

Jamie was in some previous bands, but doesn't like to talk about it. Right now he is also playing guitar in Over The Line. They have a demo, so go and get it because it is good.

**You guys are all pretty young. How and when did you get into HC?**



Well, I am the only youngster now. Mikey and Ryan were my age, but now I am the youngest. I started listening to HC around 5th grade. My brother would bring bands home like GB and YOT and I used to sneak into his room and tape them when he wasn't home.

**What were the reasons for Ryan (bass) being replaced by Matt Smith from RAIN ON THE PARADE?**

Well, to keep it short, but not too short... Ryan was great. When he first joined, it was awesome. He seemed all into it. But as time went on it seemed that he really didn't care. We only saw him at shows and when he decided to come to a practice.

Another reason was that we started out as a sXe band and were gonna stay a sXe band. Ryan was never straight edge. But we didn't know the extent of his "non-straightedge-ness." We began to find things out that we couldn't stand for. It was our hardest decision yet, but definitely a good one. Things are looking up.

**It's pretty obvious when listening to your music, but where do you draw your influences from?**

Well, I won't name 101 bands, but we are obviously into the more older-style HC, but we all listen to a variety of stuff.

**You have a demo released, along with 2 songs on comps, and a 7" out; what labels are these on, and what's some info on them?**

Ok. The demo, we did on our own. The first comp, "The Tie That Binds," was done on Joe Kuzemka's, Nevermore Records. The second comp, which I still don't know the title of, was done on Steve Lucuski's Tension Building Records. And the 7", which is finally out, appears on Youngblood Records, courtesy of Team Youngblood.

**Your lyrics are pretty straight forward, what are they about, and what influences you to write them?**

None of us are poets, so our lyrics are pretty straight forward. We write about everyday life and things that have happened to us. Stuff about the scene, the kids, and friendship.

**Out of the shows you've played so far, which one stands out as being the most memorable?**

The road trip to Boston was probably the most memorable. That was the first time we really hung out with Floorpunch. They were really good to us. Zusi put us up for the night, and we all had a great time.

**What makes for a good HC show?**

Lots of kids.

**You guys play some cover songs, which ones are they, and how have the bands you cover influenced you?**

Well, we have had a lot. In My Way (Judge), Filler (Minor Threat), New Direction (Gorilla Biscuits), We'll Make The Difference (Insted), and some more that I can't remember. I guess they just influenced us enough to play their songs.

**What are your favorite bands to play with?**

Well, Floorpunch, Atari, L.A. Guns, and Rain On The Parade, are rad. And the Ignite show we did was cool too. So was the Floorpunch/Rancor/Ignite football game we played between sets. I scored the first touchdown.

**What's the craziest thing you've ever seen happen at a show?**

When Andy got naked on stage during Earth Crisis and the one retarded roadie (the one with the X's tattooed on his hands) tackled him and punched him a few times. That was almost as funny as how they kissed everyone's ass after the show, but not as funny as the MTV interview.

**How do you feel about HC bands from the past who at the time, had alot to say and stand for, but over time threw it all away?**

To each his own I guess.

**If you could see a show with 5 past or present bands, who would you choose to see?**

Hmmm... probably the usuals... Judge, YOT, Chain of Strength, bands like that.

**Well, that's about it, any closing comments?**

No. Not really. I'm tired.



**"The memories  
are locked, the  
days just fade..."**



**...Never forget  
the friends that  
we've made."**





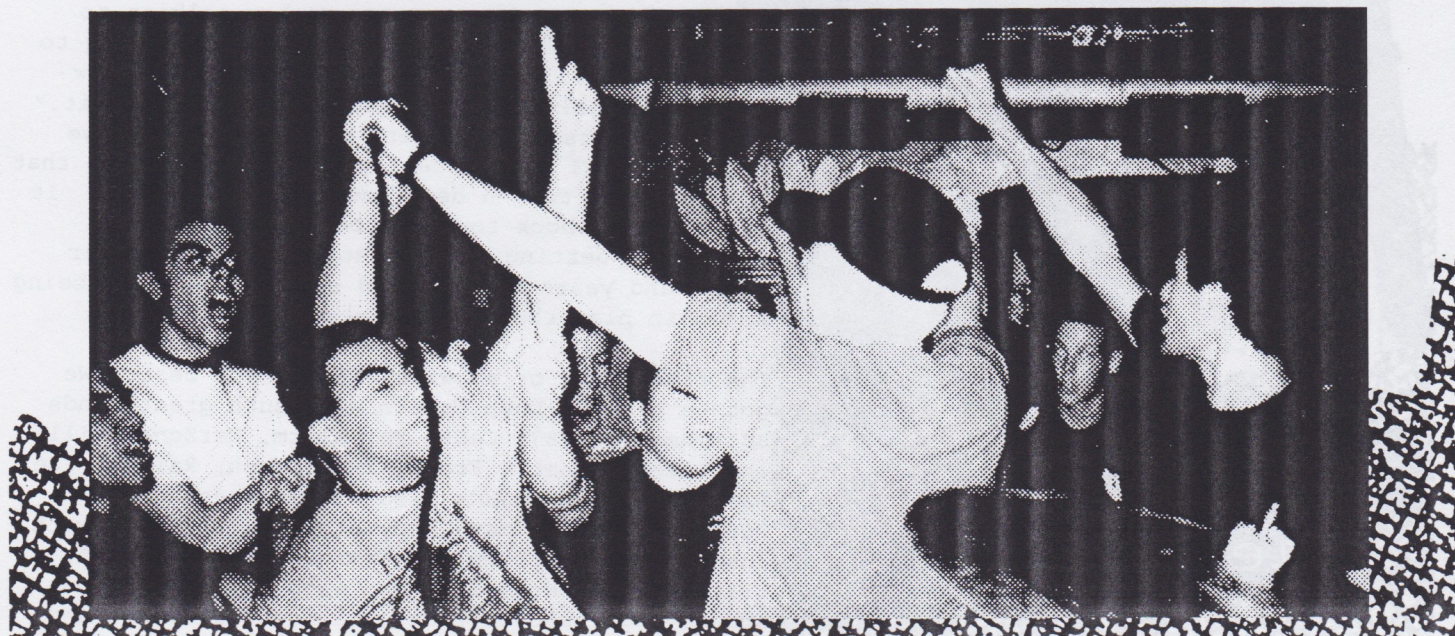
# SWEET PETE

When I was first asked to write an article on In My Eyes for IMPACT Fanzine, I did not know what to write. I am not the most proficient writer, and getting my ideas across is something that can be hard for me to do. But I will try my best.

Back at the end of '96, when IME started, the hardcore scene was witnessing a re-birth in the type of hardcore that I loved. Fast, straight-forward, and aggressive. It was something that I had waited to happen for a long, long time. I never complained when there were not so many bands playing that style, as I knew that if I was not doing anything to help (as in doing a band), that complaining about the state of the scene was not something I had a right to do. There were a few bands in the early 90's who played good hardcore that I loved (Mouthpiece, Strife etc.), but in the mid to late 90's it really took off. It seemed that every week I was seeing great shows with bands like Ten Yard Fight, Cornerstone, Fastbreak, Floorpunch, Rain on the Parade, Ensign, Hands Tied, Rancor, and countless others.

Well, everybody knows the story of Anthony P. and TYF, so I am not going to get into it here. But right after that happened, I knew that I wanted to be involved in this resurgence of the HC scene in more than just a "go to shows and support" type way. I was living with Anthony P. at the time that he left TYF, and he was very bummed out about the situation. So, after years and years of not wanting to do band, I said to him, "Let's do a straight edge band!" So now we had a singer and a guitarist, but we needed the rest of the band. One thing that Anthony and I totally agreed on was that this band was ONLY going to have friends in it. None of this "Well, I know this kid who knows this other kid who can play bass and might move to Boston and would be down to play with you guys." It had to be close friends and people we knew for years... or nothing.

Boston at the time was thriving and the scene was filled with kids who loved to go to shows and were straight edge. So we filled-in the lineup with our good friends Luke, Neal, and Damian, and got down to practicing. Those first few practices (in Anthony and mine's basement) were tough. The songs were rough and I HATED hearing my voice. I even quit after the second practice





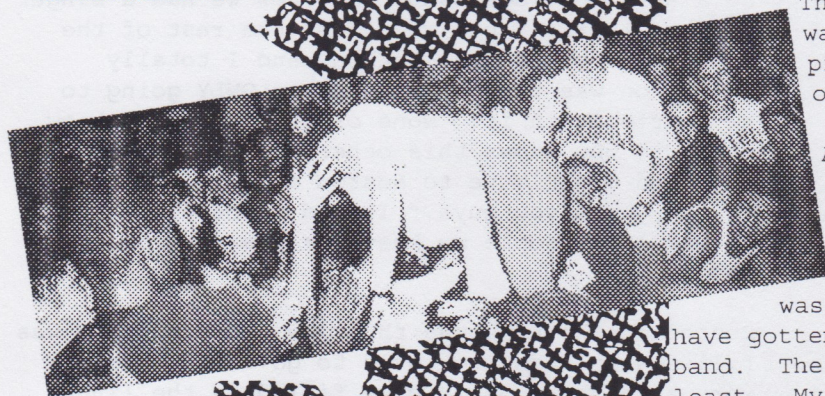
"Those times  
were good, man..."



as I did not think anyone would like my voice. Anthony talked me back into the band after that 2nd practice, and we continued to practice two to three times a week. During this time we got down the songs that would end up as our demo. We would practice for hours and have the best time. I think that the time before a band releases a demo or plays a show is the best time as that is the most pure, fun time of a band as you are all just friends having a good time with no pressure and no expectations.

So, after months and months of getting those first songs down, we decided that we would play our first show. Our friend Craig Mack was booking a show in CT and said he would be glad to have us play. The only problem was that we did not have a name. Up until about two minutes before we actually played that show, we did not have the name, In My Eyes. The band, all the way down, was stuck between calling us In My Eyes or Built on Trust (like our song). So finally, right before we go on stage, we decide to call ourselves In My Eyes.

There was no turning back. That first show was amazing as a lot of our friends had a practice tape of our songs and just went off for us.



A few weeks after that show, we went into the studio with Brian McTernan at Salad Days to record the demo. Brian knew that I was nervous about singing, and I can honestly tell you that if it was not for Brian, I probably would not have gotten through that session or stayed in the band. The first few takes were ROUGH to say the least. My voice sounded like Choke from SlapShot on the first take of it, but then Brian talked to me and told me to relax and just be myself in there.



The demo dropped, and to be honest, I had no idea what to expect. I remember talking to Luke right after we recorded, and us saying to each other, "I guess we will just play a few shows locally and have some fun and that's it." Well, I guess things went much better than we expected! I cannot tell you how happy I was that people took to the demo and really liked it. It was such a shock to me to be selling so many demos and getting offered so many shows. After years and years of going to shows, I was now being asked to play them. It blew me away!

The first year or so with IME was the best. We got to play on both coasts with such great bands as Redemption 87, Cause For Alarm, WarZone, Killing Time, Agnostic Front, Floorpunch, Rain on the Parade, Ensign, Hands Tied, Time Flies, Count Me Out, Strife, and many many others. All this with just a demo out! My weekends were filled with traveling to shows in a van with my best friends and having the best times. I mean for years and

...my best  
lies ahead!"



years I had been traveling all over every weekend for shows, but being in a band was a different feeling.

I want to get away from talking about IME now to concentrate on talking about the scene from '96-'98. It seemed that from '96-'98, if IME was not playing a show somewhere, that there was always an AMAZING show every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The feeling in the air was intense. It seemed like bands and kids cared more about HC now than I had witnessed in a long, long time. Kids were excited about straight edge and being a part of something special that was taking place. New Jersey had one of the best scenes back then. I remember going to NJ shows and just getting chills seeing all the kids there going off, getting into the music, and seeming to care!

One thing I never did take for granted was what the scene was like back then, as I knew it would not last. I had hoped that it would last, but being into HC for a long time, I know these things go in cycles. I guess I just want to end this by saying thank you to all the kids that made hardcore '96-'98 so special for me and hopefully for everyone involved. It is hard to describe on paper the feeling in the air at that time. It was special, very special, and something I will not forget. If you were there you know the feeling, and if you were not then I suggest we all work together to getting that feeling back into HC. There are tons of bands around today who are working their asses off and care about this scene so much. I say let's all show them support and do our part to make this scene stronger.

Thankxxx,  
Pete

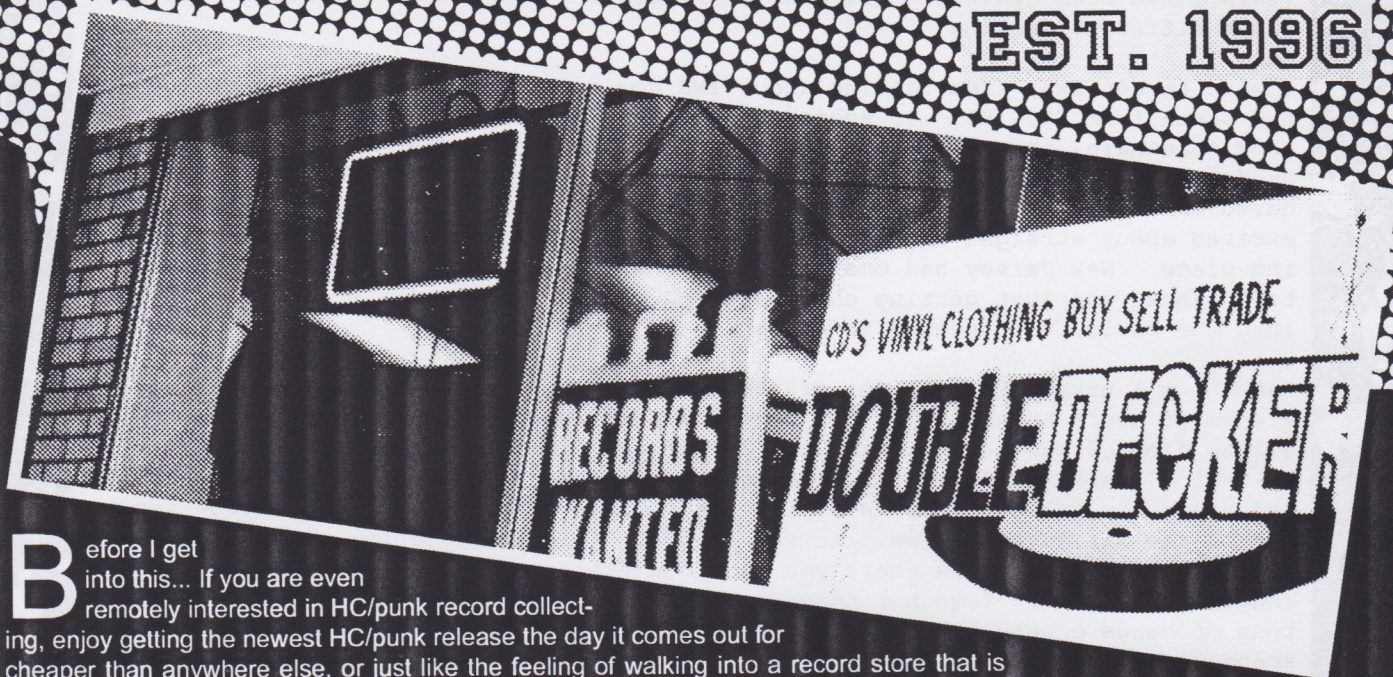
1997



2000



EST. 1996



**B**efore I get into this... If you are even remotely interested in HC/punk record collecting, enjoy getting the newest HC/punk release the day it comes out for cheaper than anywhere else, or just like the feeling of walking into a record store that is covered wall to wall, floor to ceiling with only HC/punk records, CDs, tapes, zines, shirts, stickers, videos, buttons, books, posters, etc, and you haven't been to DOUBLE DECKER RECORDS in Allentown PA, then put this down right now and go there. Trust me, you'll be doing yourself a favor. Seriously, I can attribute more than half of my record collection to Jamie and Amy's place, as well as almost anything I ever bought new on tape or cd that I didn't get at a show or through mail-order. This was, and still is, the exclusive HC/punk record store as far as I'm concerned—and I don't even get the chance to go there that much anymore.

Originally, I thought about interviewing Jamie to try to sum this place up, but, our friend Bucky has already done this, and the interview will be published in his zine, *Fleeting Fury*. At most of the bigger shows I saw in my first couple years of hardcore, I got my first taste of many bands from a guy and girl who sat behind 2 huge distro tables, filled with boxes of records, CD's, fanzines, and shirts. I usually spent whatever money I had in my pockets, as well as whatever I was able to bum off of my parents, since there was always more new hardcore tunes I was after. The guy and girl's name were Jamie and Amy, and they must have always been happy when "Moneybags Gordo" came along, because I'm sure I always put a few dollars in their pocket after I walked away from their tables. Their distro was called Shoehorn, and they mentioned that they were trying to open up a record store in the Allentown area, which is only about 45 minutes from my hometown. They said that it would have way more than what they brought to shows, in addition to old collectable records and a greater variety of underground music. I couldn't wait for the day.

About a year later (around October of 1996), Double Decker officially opened up their store in the heart of Allentown in a small, little corner front. They had a grand-opening type thing the day they opened (a Saturday), and I knew some older kids who went down. I could have gone, but figured since they were just opening, maybe I would wait another couple weeks and bug my Mom to take me (I was 14 at the time).

Within a few days I found out that at DD's opening they had an entire wall full of rare vinyl, late 80's HC classics that I was after for and willing to give an arm and a leg for... and it all got sold that day. "Break Down The Walls" twelve inch on Wishingwell, "We're Not In This Alone" Caroline twelve inch, Chain Of Strength seven inches, Uniform Choice "Screaming for Change" twelve inch originals... the foundation pieces to a solid record collection that kept me up at night, pondering how I could acquire such gems. I had searched on the internet (still fairly new at the time, strange!), but it seemed that people didn't sell stuff like that. So there was my chance at DD, and I blew it. Frantically, I called Jamie. He said don't worry, we'll be getting more of that stuff.

That Friday, this kid named Shannon, who was a few years older than me, had a license, and was kind of into punk, said that he would take me down there that night. Fuck yeah! So when 7pm rolled around and I was getting ready for him to pick me up, he called and said he had to stay at work. I couldn't believe it, I was so pumped to get to this place, and now I would have to wait again. But there was a punk show down in Allentown the next weekend that he wanted to go to, so he said we would go then for sure. Ok, cool.

By the time that next Saturday night rolled around I was really amped on getting down there. We followed the directions to a T, only to find a dark street possessing nothing that resembled a record store. We walked around, and I noticed that the





**"The whole ride home I just mumbled 'ohmagod' while looking at each one."**

**JUDGE**



street was pitch black. Nothing opened, no street lights, and it was only 8 o'clock. Then I noticed it, on the corner: Double Decker Records. I ran up, only to see all the lights off, nobody around, only a store full of inaccessible hardcore possessions. It was a small place but had everything I could ask for. There on the wall behind the register were records that said it all: both Chain eps, YOT BDTW on Wishingwell, YOT WNITA on Caroline, GB seven inch first and second presses... the real classics, most of which I had never even seen in person, just waiting to be bought, and the fucking place was closed, even though the sign said open until 10. Unbelievable. We hung out for a little bit, but nobody was around. I went to the shitty punk show in heartbreak and confusion.

The next morning I called Jamie to see what the deal was. He said that what happened was that the power had gone out on the street, and he and Amy had gone back to their apartment, which was a block away, for 20 minutes until the power came back on. I asked him about the records they had on the wall, and how I missed out on them (at the time I didn't realize that these finds really weren't all that rare). He said he would hold them for me until next weekend when I could get down there again.

You better believe that I was there at 10am that next Saturday, my Mom patiently waiting in the car as I fulfilled my material HC dreams. I think I got both Chain eps for \$20 each, YOT BDTW on Wishingwell for \$20, YOT WNITA on Caroline for \$15, a GB seven inch on yellow for \$25, and a big one: the Unity 7" for \$40...the real classics. Granted they were "collector prices," but I had them! The whole ride home I just mumbled "ohmagod" while looking at each one. I had been sucked into the collector game.

Almost every weekend I would find a way to get to DD, purchasing the records I had asked Jamie to hold for me during the week. All the late 80's classics, some early 80's stuff within reason, and the early 90's rarities seemed to be within reach through DD. The great thing was that DD enabled me to pick up rare records that I wasn't interested in and trade them for stuff I was. I could easily say that one-fourth of the rare hardcore records I have today, I got in trades where I gave up obscure punk or early hardcore records bought at DD. The way I saw it, it was easier to spend the money on something hard to find that I wasn't interested and trade it later for something I was looking for, as opposed to constantly buying and trading HC records I loved... otherwise, I never would have built a collection.

Besides records, DD was video headquarters. Though former IMPACT ONLINE associate, Brian Meryweather, was a big video trader and I got most of my tapes from him, DD had stacks of HC videos for sale that soon found their way into my living room. Likewise, a 'zine library was started, where Jamie and Amy brought in much of their own collection and put them on the racks for anyone to read. Original Touch and Go's, Flipsides, early MRRs, My Rules photo zines, XXX, early Suburban Voices, and countless late 80's/early 90's one-offs were all there for your viewing pleasure. I was able to talk Jamie into lending me many of them to photocopy, and before I knew it, my zine collection was filling bookcases in my house.

Outside of the store, Jamie and Amy were busy doing shows in attempts to put the Allentown scene back on the map. One of the first shows they did was in the summer of 1997 at a place not too far from the store, called "The Pioneer Club," where Rancor, The Ultimate Warriors, and Overcast played. Though from the outside, the building fit in with the run-down, lower income section of town, the inside was actually really nice with a stage, video games, wood floors and a bar with a small





**"You could spot it from blocks away, with HC and punk posters covering the big, corner windows."**

kitchen. Supposedly, it was a fortune to rent out, and I don't think any other shows got put on there. Jamie and Amy then started doing shows at The Sweatshop on the other side of Allentown. The place got it's name from the unbearable heat inside, no matter what time of year, and it was a pretty cool set-up with a dark, almost underground type feeling inside of it. They did shows on a pretty regular basis, and used a membership system where you paid a flat fee to join and then only about three dollars a show. In case you've never been to Allentown, it has a glorious history of nazi skinhead activity, thug life, and just plain, trouble-startin' motherfuckers to come ruin shows. The membership policy seemed to counter-act this type of thing and I don't think there were ever many problems at The Sweatshop.

Around this same time, Jamie and Amy moved DD up the street to a bigger location, on a corner that gave them the room they needed. You could spot it from blocks away, with HC and punk posters covering the big, corner windows. Every time I walked up the cement stairs and opened the door, I knew the next hour and a half was going be a good time. Back at The Sweatshop, shows continued throughout the winter and spring of 1998-99, though for some reason things seemed to slow down and soon, shows ceased by the summer of '99. Many of the bills were pretty mixed and often the bands were more in the noise/indie/punk vein, making my attendance somewhat limited.

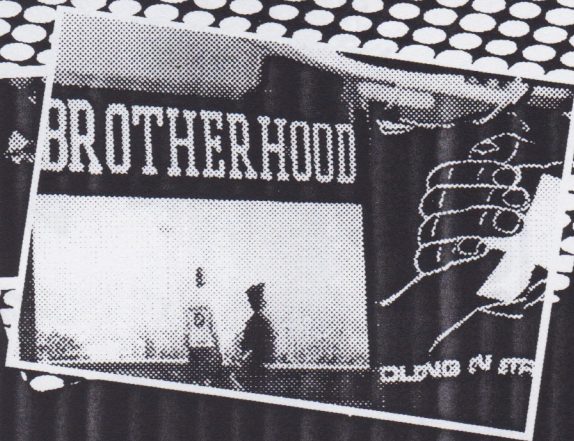
One of the funniest things I remember was when some of the guys from The Ultimate Warriors did a total Crucial Youth-type sham band called "Posi Machine 3000." To this day I don't think I ever laughed so much at a live band. These guys dressed up in puffy costumes depicting a pack of cigarettes, a milk jug, an orange, and I believe a sharpie marker. Their songs were about the struggles and triumphs of being a positive youth, saying no to cigarettes (during which they all attacked the guy in the cigarette costume), the benefits of Vitamin C (embracing the Orange dude), and also the positives of calcium (embracing the milk guy). And of course, how could you forget using the sharpie marker guy to X'up the crowd? Though I usually don't get that much of a kick out of joke bands, these guys were funny as hell.

Another band, Terminal Crash, played a separate show. Walking around was some kid with long, black, wet hair, dark mascara and some very strange jewelry. I think he was also wearing a raincoat, despite the weather. Nothing all that odd at a punk show, until someone told me that it was Mikey, the one-time front man of Shelter's little brother band, posi-Krishna young'uns, Prema. Right on. No more shaved head and robes for him.



**DOUBLE DECKER RECORDS**  
**610 . 439 . 3600**  
**803 ST. JOHNS ST.**  
**ALLENTOWN PA 18103**

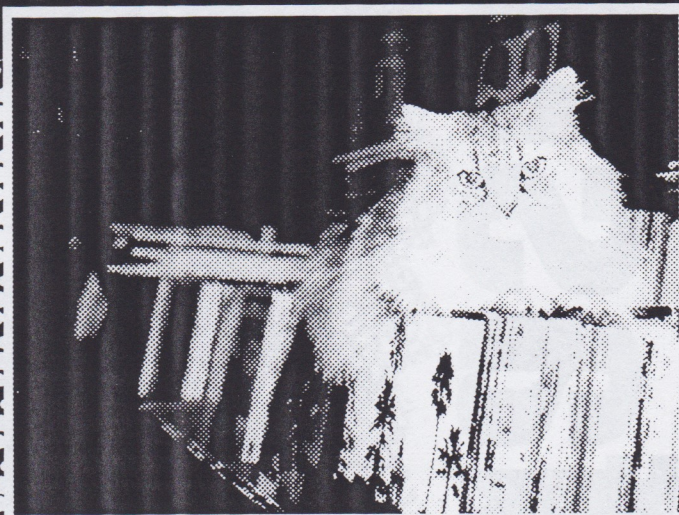
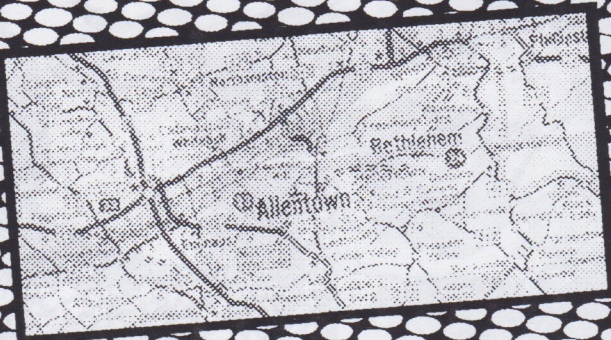




Maybe the best of all at the Sweatshop was Rancor's "last show," which basically was one on-going fit of excitement about the WWF and it's related slogans ("suck it!" & "can you smell what the rock is cookin' ?", etc), as proclaimed by none other than Andy Frobese. I don't even remember the songs, I just remember Frobese being totally off the wall. Moshing on the dance floor when he should have been singing, making semi-lewd gestures, hitting band mates, pretending to hump people in the crowd, and basically just causing me to laugh my ass off. From what I could see, the Sweatshop got things going in the Allentown area, a hard thing to do. Jamie and Amy eventually ran into problems at the Sweatshop, though I'm not sure what exactly led to the end of shows there. In the summer of 1999 they started doing some shows at a place called Club Carrigan's, only a few miles outside of the downtown section of Allentown. I'm not really sure what this place did outside of shows, but they had a big-ass stage that never really got used to it's potential at any shows I was at. Pete's old band, Parting Shot, played there once, I also saw the Nerve Agents play an awesome set with the Explosion and Rain On The Parade, that same summer. After that show, I quickly became a much more enthused Nerve Agents fan, as Eric's vocals that night could have shattered 4 inch thick glass as every member went off. Mainstrike also played there that summer, though I couldn't get to the show. I later found out that sadly only a few people were there. I really wish I could have made it there to see them that night.

Eventually shows there really became sparse, and much didn't seem to continue through the rest of 1999 or 2000, at least from what I knew. Regardless, Jamie and Amy kept doing their part through Double Decker, and every time I was there they had a little bit more packed into the store, even extending a miscellaneous vinyl selection with old rock and rap. By now, it seemed that most people considered this the premier HC/punk record store in the tri-state area, and I heard that at the first Posi Numbers show, car loads of kids took the trip from Wilkes-Barre to Allentown to see if it was more than just hype. In 2000 or 2001, Amy moved and Jamie took over the store.

Today, and even in the past couple years, I haven't made it down to stop in nearly as much, mostly due to having found the vast majority of old records that I wanted. But when I do, I always make sure I have more than a half an hour to spend and some money in my pocket, because it's impossible to walk out empty handed. This place was really instrumental in my becoming a hardcore kid, and for that I will always be thankful to Jamie and Amy.





# fastbreak

1995-2000







Day?... Then check this out"—style review.

About a month passed (we tended to put out about an issue per month), and on a day like any other, I was called down to the main office. With no real expectations for anything positive to come from such a request, I made my way down the stairs and into the main building where I was handed a small slip of paper by the secretary:

"Pete Russo- Jim Porcelly, father of John would like to talk to you about your Shelter article. Please call 717-XXX-XXXX."

It was the fall of '97, the first semester of my sophomore year of high school. Around the time it would be safe to say that 6 of my closest friends were straight edge, into hardcore and anxious to make it to whatever shows possible. Being into hardcore at the age of 16 meant it pretty much consumed your everyday life—girls were still making fun of your pubescent voice (maybe just mine), and invites to the "older kid's parties" were still a pipe dream. There was no interest in drinking or drugs really, and those who were into it were quickly written-off as "druggies." If you had any other interest other than music as a 16 year-old hardcore kid, than it was pretty much fulfilled during a game of whiffle-ball after Saturday's band practice...

But as I was saying, hardcore overcame everyday life, to all extents. Point in case, a friend of mine, named Steve Sutter, a local punk kid who put on shows and did a small label, was the Review editor of the school newspaper, whom I worked under as a staff writer my freshman year. The prior year had brought about his graduation and with much thanks, he passed down his duties to me, in the hopes of continuing his dream. Steve had one agenda when it came to the school newspaper—using it as a means to convert the masses of a culturally-inept, white, suburban high school, into genuine punk and hardcore kids by ONLY writing and reviewing punk and hardcore music—putting it into terms your common teenager could understand and, hopefully, relate to, thus becoming a dedicated, active member of the local scene—which had since dwindled on account of the closing of the infamous, local venue, Spanky's. How could I not try my best?...

That September brought about the release of the long-awaited, yet strangely received, "Beyond Planet Earth," the latest effort from Shelter. Without hesitation I borrowed my friend, Brian's, cassette copy (cassette? what?), in the hopes I'd found another "gateway record" with which to attract some recruits. Needless to say, I was a bit uneasy with the record... the ska song, the overabundance of rap verses, a little more diverse than I was expecting. But again, like I did with so many others, I gave it a decent review, nothing spectacular, just the typical "You like Green

Ha, fucking, ha. Good joke, guys. I made my way back to class, expecting laughs from Gordo and company, but was only met with confusion.

"You really have no clue what I'm talking about?"

"Dude, what the fuck ARE you talking about?!"

Believe me, if anyone was skeptical, it was me. But after two hours of confusion and bewildered discussion, I came to the conclusion that maybe, in fact, it wasn't a joke perpetrated by my friends.

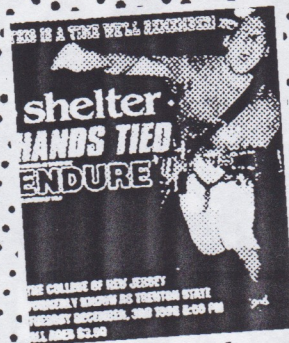
That night, after rushing through dinner, I ran up to my room—door shut, phone in hand... I was ready to find out who was really behind this...

"Hi, uhmmm... This is Pete Russo. I got a note from Jim Porcelly... is this him??"

"Huh?... Oh yeah, the Shelter article..."

From thereon, occurred the strangest hour and a half conversation I've ever had regarding the 'core. It was indeed Slam's father, residing not more than 45 minutes from my home. We talked a good while, during which he explained that his daughter-in-law had stopped by to pick up her nephew for a dentist appointment, and, while waiting in the office, happened to pick up a copy of the school paper, and spotted my review. Without hesitation, he told me all about himself, how he had all his "old albums" framed on the wall, and just how proud he was of his son. Regretfully, he mentioned, he didn't often get the chance to see John because of his relentless touring and the fact that John lived "up north." He answered every question I had to the best of his ability, as his hearing wasn't all that good. He did, however, give me plenty to brag about, tell some funny little stories about John, and even helped me appreciate my father a bit more.

Talk about coincidences... and yeah, I had to drop the question, "So do you have any old records laying around you want to get rid of?," to no avail.



Pete Russo  
Jim Porcelly father  
of John would like  
to talk 2 you about  
your Shelter article  
Please call  
717- [redacted] - [redacted]





**MAINSTRIKE**

**BURN**

the reunions.

**SPEAK**  
SEVEN ONE FOUR

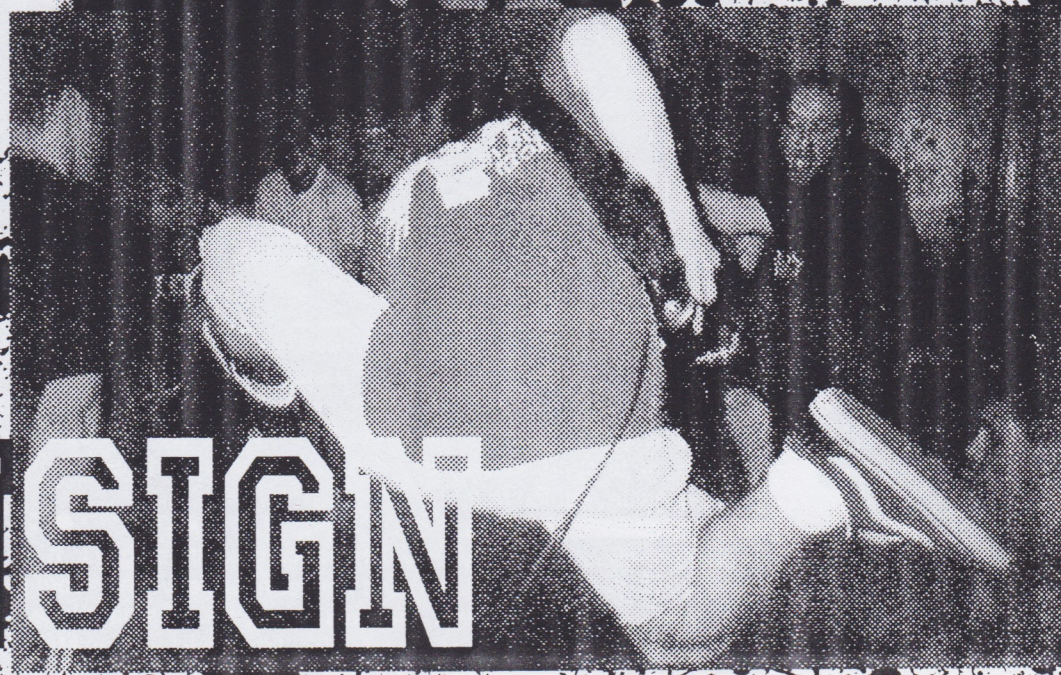


level ball



atari

WE'LL BE FIGHTING!



ENSIGN



# AUTOMATIC

## DEDICATION. NOW MORE THAN EVER!

I can't imagine that too many people are going to read this and say "Man, I used to see those guys play all the time, they really flipped the scene on it's ass!" After all, these guys were from Louisville, Kentucky, home of such prominent, hardcore classics, like...

Well, the last axeman in Mouthpiece to share six string duties with Chris Schuster, was a dude named, Matt Weider. He seemed like a really solid guitarist with the Grease, and after they decided to call it a day (or, 6 years), he headed south for Louisville. Supposedly, there was talk of him doing what would become Hands Tied... if he hadn't moved. Obviously though, he did, and Hands Tied made room for other members, becoming a full-fledged band.

A couple of years later, around the beginning of 1998, I had heard that Matt had started a new band, a really good band for that matter, in a very rocking, UC/Dag Nasty "Can I Say" vein. The name was Automatic. I remember being told that the record had been out for a few months and that I had probably skipped right by it due to the lame cover art. My next trip to Double Decker Records brought me to the "A" section of the seven inch boxes, where I discovered a 7" titled, "Automatic," complete with a four year old, adorning an X on his left hand, riding a tricycle. Right. I couldn't imagine this really being a great listen, but a few hours later I was proven wrong as the needle fell upon this record. "UC and Dag Nasty" was a very fair comparison. Matt did everything but play drums on the recording, and turned out very catchy, driving, SoCal style core, leaving me to wonder if maybe Matt had gotten ahold of Joe Foster's practice tapes...

Well, a few months later they traveled north and I got to see them twice (May 15 and 16, 1998) with Speak 714 in Princeton, NJ and Philly, respectively. I'm sure very few had the record, leaving them without the biggest reaction. Matt stuck to just vocals and cool hair live, and even had some Dubar-esque qualities to him on stage. They covered Minor Threat's "Betray" at both sets, creating a bit of a buzz. They also played new songs which sounded ten times better, captured somewhere on cassette, recorded at the Philly show. Unfortunately, this would be the last time they made it back north. Matt was busy with The Enkindles, and drummer Tommy Browne had to play with By The Grace Of God and keep Duncan safe.

It wasn't too long until 5 new songs turned up as a cd/7" on Indecision Records with the title "Crossing Kill Creek." Though they seemed more promising when I heard them live, they were still solid songs with more tempo changes and musicianship than found on the previous 7". I was hoping they would come through the tri-state area again, maybe this time with Ignite, Mindfunk, and a Pushed Aside reunion tour.

From here on, I don't really know what became of these guys. It never seemed like they played out a whole lot, and I never heard anything about plans to tour or hang it up. Before I knew it, they just seemed like a small piece of hardcore history from the fading era of the late 90's. Interview by Brian Meryweather...







#### **How did Automatic start?**

Actually, the idea of it started a long time ago. I met Thommy, the drummer, through Prodigy on the internet and we talked back and forth. I came down to Louisville a couple of times and we always talked about how we were going to do a straight edge band because straight edge isn't a really popular thing in Louisville, he was the only straight edge kid I knew was from Louisville. So we were like "yeah, we should do a straight edge band," just kind of joking around. I ended up moving to Kentucky so we decided to just do it because I had already had the songs written, at least most of them, I was like "we should do that band." So we practiced and eventually we talked to the guy from Capsule Records and we said "yeah, we have a band" and he was like "oh really, I'll put you guys out." We were like "ok, but you've never heard us..." he was like "Oh, I don't care, I want to put you guys out." It was supposed to be a four way split LP with us, Battery, Hands Tied and Halfmast. He called me up an month later and was like "oh, everyone else backed out," we're like "we'll just do a seven inch then, that's fine." We went in and recorded the seven inch and he said that we should become a real band so we found some people and now we're a real band I guess.

#### **So when it was Thommy and you, it was just you two doing the music?**

Yeah, on the record I did everything except drums. Thommy played the drums.

#### **Didn't you throw around the idea of joining Hands Tied?**

Yeah, when Hands Tied started it was Tim, Ed and I. We were going to do a new band after Mouthpiece. We knew it the whole time, we were like "what's the name going to be?" and stuff like that. I think we were talking about it on the Mouthpiece west coast tour in '95. Even before Mouthpiece broke up we were going to do another band. Two of the songs on the seven inch are actually songs that I wrote for Hands Tied, the music for them anyway.

#### **Which two songs?**

"Monument" and "Drive Blind." Supposedly, from what Ed says, one of the riffs from "Drive

**"...when people get behind their cars they just become maniacs."**

Blind" is on the Hands Tied seven inch. I guess they used it in one of their songs, but I've never heard it. So I was going to be in that band, but I ended up leaving the area and moving to Kentucky and this happened.

#### **So after you guys did the seven inch, how did the rest of the band come together?**

Well, we were like "ok, we want to be a straight edge band." Not like a militant straight edge band or anything, but one of the



things that was important to us was that everyone in the band be straight edge. We wanted to find people who could play and had decent equipment and were also straight edge, that was kind of a tough thing to make happen. Especially around here where there's not a lot of people who are straight edge, and the ones that are seem to be really young. The person who was playing bass for The Enkindles at the time, we got him to play guitar, we had his little brother, who is still a pretty talented musician and we needed to find another guitar player. We've actually had a bunch of different guitar players already, but the nucleus of the band right now is Thommy, the bass player for The Enkindles right now, his name is Dan and he also plays for Automatic, Ryan plays guitar, and I sing. We keep having to switch second guitar players because we keep getting the same people filling in. As of right now, we really have four people and are looking for that fifth person.

### **What's the scene like in Kentucky?**

For the stuff that we do, there isn't much of a scene. As far as shows go, there are a lot of shows and a lot of kids who are into it. It's kind of self absorbed, everyone is into things that just involve Louisville so a lot of the out of town bands that are popular everywhere else can't draw here, it's kind of strange. I actually like it. I like to keep away from everything.

### **Do you think you get a better response in Jersey or Philly, as compared to Louisville?**

Oh yeah. In Kentucky there might only be a group of ten or fifteen people who like us a lot, everyone else could care less. Our crowd is on the east coast. We played Krazy Fest here and it was insane. There was a lot of kids from out of town and everyone here that like us. It was really awesome and was definitely the best show that we have played.

### **Thommy played drums in By the Grace of God, right?**

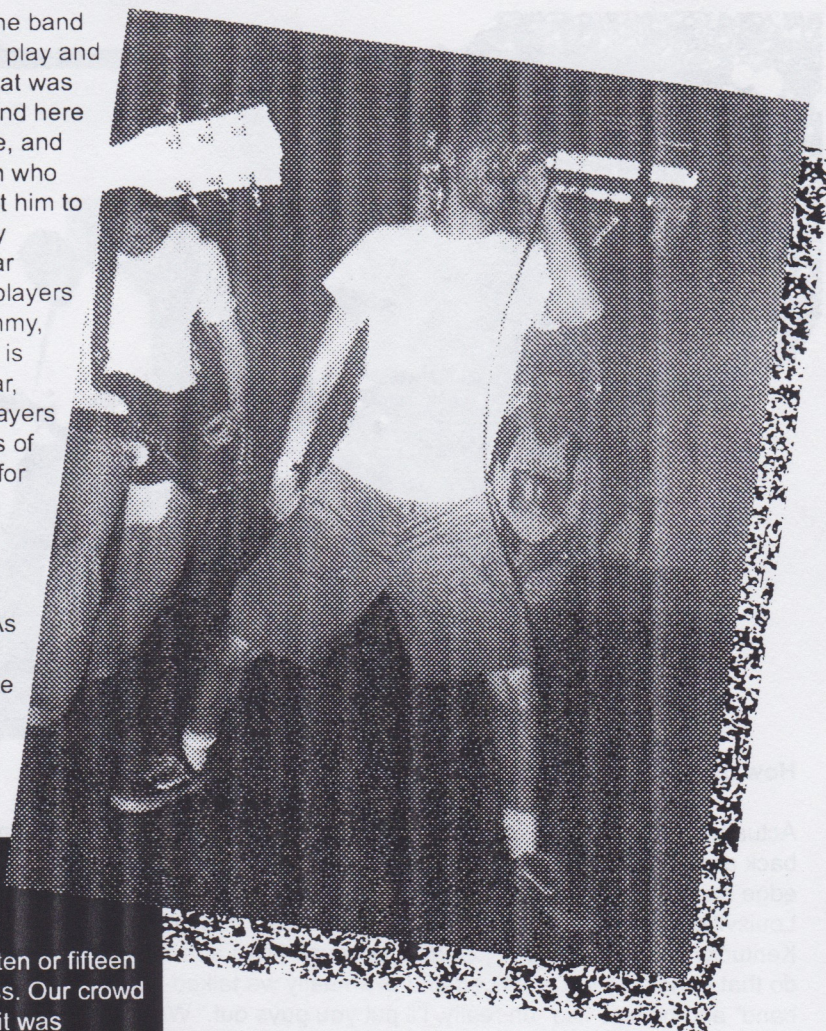
Yeah.

### **What is your reaction to everything that went on between them and Floorpunch? Since Thommy was in By the Grace of God, I imagine it had some effect on you also...**

Yeah, I mean... It's kind of a touchy subject. There's kind of a division here between those guys and the people who aren't affected. We used to be friends, but we aren't anymore, I'm not really sure how it happened but it did. As far as that whole thing goes, I don't think anyone cares. It's just something that happened between Duncan (By the Grace of God) and Mark (Floorpunch). Either way you look at it, I think they were probably wrong on both sides and I could actually care less about what happened and I don't think Thommy even really cares either. Duncan retired, so it doesn't even matter. If people think it's like Louisville and New Jersey, it's not like that at all...

### **I think the lyrics to "Drive Blind" are kind of interesting, what is that song really about?**

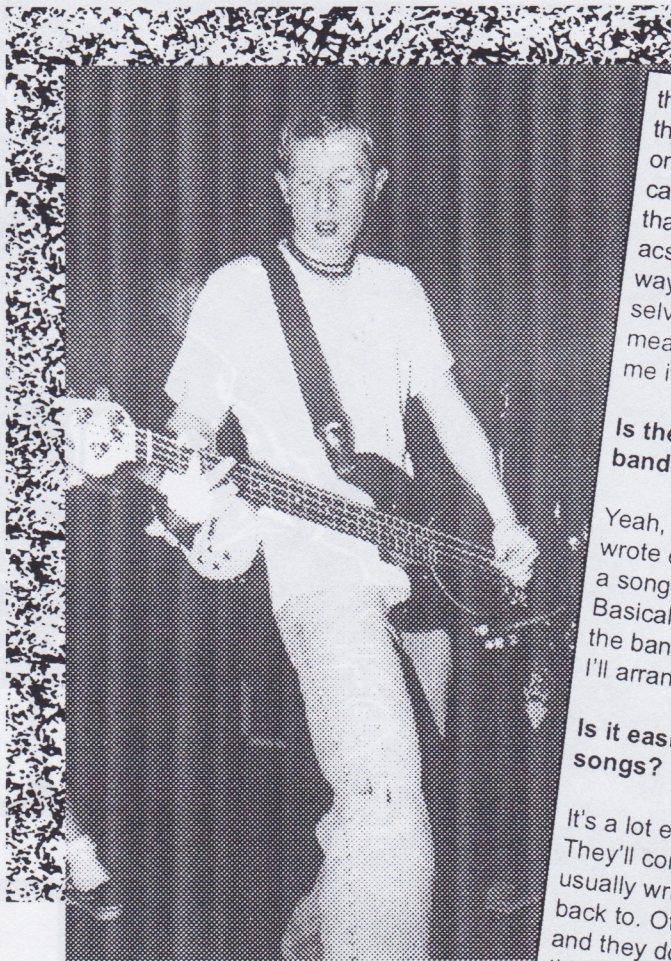
The song, I guess, literally, is about how people are just slaves to



### **DRIVE BLIND**

Plastic smiles melt away so fast  
Dripping poison on the things that we build  
Choke on convenience fuel the machine  
It doesn't give a damn about the things that it kills  
And what makes it so sick  
What makes you such a fool  
You never feel an ounce of guilt  
You never felt so fucking cool  
In life My life is all that I have  
Grey skies Choking us to death  
Guilty hands You could care less  
You don't get it  
You're killing us 85 miles an hour  
Now you're running out of gas  
Take a look at yourself  
A good hard look  
Through the pieces of broken glass  
And everyone's affected  
A slave to their false needs  
Choke on convenience  
Fuel the machine  
Stay a prisoner to the lives we lead  
Choke on your self image  
Feel your worthless greed  
Don't ask how you killed it  
Continue to feel your selfish needs





**And the new record is going to be on My War Records?**

Yeah.

**How did that come about?**

Matt from My War, and a friend of mine, drove down to Kentucky to see us play. I was talking about how New Direction wanted to put it out, but we would have to wait for him to get more money back from the Envy CD and Matt was like "I'll put it out right now if you want." So we were like "OK." We were going to record a few months back but that was canceled, we were actually going to record tonight but that got cancelled... The Enkindles are leaving for a six week tour soon so I really don't know when we are going to get it recorded.

**The new one is going to be an LP and a 7"?**

Yeah the LP will have the old seven inch plus five new songs, the 7" will just have the new songs.

**That sounds cool, is there anything else you would like to mention?**

Yeah, keep your eyes peeled for the new Automatic record when it comes out.

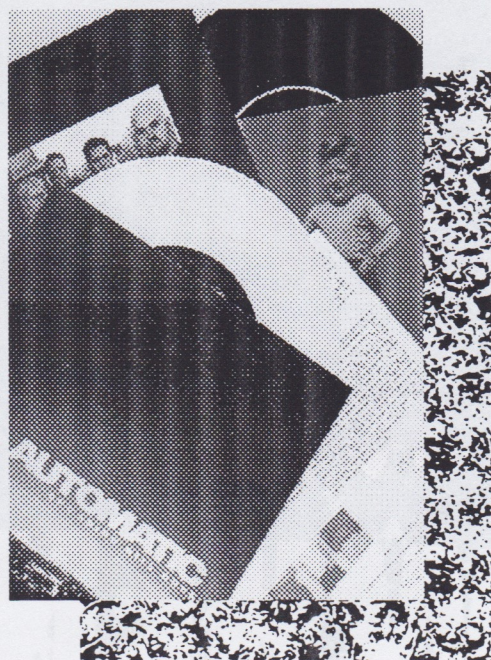
their cars. When I lived in New York City, how many cars were on the street and how there is so much mass transit available. No one wants to take the train or ride a bus, they want to drive their cars everywhere. It makes things really dangerous, and besides that, when people get behind their cars they just become maniacs. But it's mostly about convenience and how to take the easy way in everything regardless of what the effects are to themselves and everyone else around them. And the environment. I mean, I'm totally included in that too. I ride a bike everywhere, for me it's just so much fun. It's kind of silly, but...

**Is the music for the new songs being written as a whole band now?**

Yeah, kind of. There are a couple songs on the new record that I wrote everything and it's like "here is the song, let's do it," there's a song that Thommy wrote, there's a song that Ryan wrote. Basically what happens is, I usually have songs that I'll show to the band and someone will be like "oh, I have this idea," and then I'll arrange it so. It's definitely more of a band effort.

**Is it easier when you have other people giving input to songs?**

It's a lot easier because I won't have to come up with every part. They'll come up with something I would have never thought of. I usually write songs a certain way, I have a formula I usually go back to. Other people in the band's thinking is different than mine and they do things I would never have thought to do. I definitely think that the new record is going to be a lot better than our other one because we are going to spend a lot more time getting it together. We kind of rushed the first one.







**O**ne of the first people who ever turned me on to good HC was a red headed kid from Bethlehem, Pa named Dan Horner who was four years older than me. He always kind of hung out in my town with his friends, who were all into emo, metal, or just plain bad hardcore for the most part. He played bass in a band called December, though that is the only mentioning they deserve in a hardcore fanzine. Horner, however, was totally into old hardcore, all the classics. I remember him rocking CHAIN "true till death" and YOT "87 tour" shirts... he knew what the fuck was up. He was always advising me as to what records to buy and so forth, and basically pointed me in the right direction.

During the summer of '96 he had told me that he was trying to start a band with some guys from NJ, along with Steve Lucuski who did Tension Building Fanzine, whom I barely knew at the time. Horner assured me that this band was gonna rock. Soon enough they were practicing, and it looked like there would be one more band to get excited about once they started playing out. On January 4th of 1997, while I was on vacation with my family in Florida, Hands Tied, Floorpunch, Fastbreak, and Last Straw played a show in Fieldsboro, NJ and I missed it. As if that wasn't shitty enough, I soon found out that Over The Line jumped on after Floorpunch's set and did 3 songs as well as a cover of BOLD's "Talk is Cheap." Wow.

A month later, Over The Line recorded their demo at Signal Sound Studios. Horner told me that he was really happy with it, and that I would hear it soon. The next weekend he came up to my house, and pulled out a cassette case with a red cover, 3 hulking, hooded dudes on the front, ready to throw a beat down on whoever stepped OVER THE LINE. Instantly I knew it was

# WHEN MY BACK





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gonna be good. I put it in my stereo and was instantly floored. The recording was clear, the guitars were thick, the drums were heavy, the bass had the right rumble, and Lucuski's vocals were a higher version of Curtis Chain's, in my ears. To this day I still think the second song on that demo is one of the best HC has ever heard.

Just a couple weeks later on March 8th, Hands Tied, 97a, Rain On The Parade, Uprise, Purpose, and Common Ground played in New Providence, NJ. After ROTP's set I was just relaxing, getting psyched while waiting to see the Tied. Then I noticed Horner and the other OTL dudes carrying equipment towards the stage. "Gordo, get ready to bust bro, we're fuckin' playing right now before Hands Tied." Within a few minutes they had taken the small stage and were tearing through the demo songs. Nobody had the demo yet, and most people hadn't even really known anything about them, but I sang along to every fuckin' word. Lucuski was a reincarnation of SLAM, out of breath and looking like he was ready to knock someone out at any given moment. Before I knew it they had played the entire demo, so I was waiting to hear the opening of "Talk is Cheap." Instead came the first chord of Side By Side's "My Life To Live." New Providence erupted, and I became just another head to jump on. All I remember is singing along and the solo at the end not sounding anything like it did on the seven inch. OVER THE LINE had arrived. It seemed like people were forking cash over to Lucuski for demos within seconds after they stepped off the stage.

Three weeks later they were scheduled to play in Yardley, PA at a show with almost the same line-up, and I was counting the days, envisioning pile-ons the size of a house and stage

'S TO THE WALL...



# ...AND ALL THE PROMISES AND



dives that would make Alex Brown proud. Well, there ended up not being a stage, but that didn't slow down OTL. Lucuski went off harder than maybe any frontman I had ever seen, yet again reconfirming observation that he was, indeed, the second coming of Porcell from the PX days. I also learned that his idea of extending the mic on sing-alongs was actually a punch to your chin with the mic

while you yelled the words. Though hundreds of kids singing along wasn't the scenario as I had hoped for, many were still feeling the OTL vibe. They closed with "My Life To Live"... but that wasn't all.

After some bickering came the signature drums and bass line to Unit Pride's classic, "Making a Difference." If memory serves me correctly, they fucked it up and had to start over. At the end Lucuski was bright red, his CHAIN "true till death" shirt soaked in sweat. For what seemed like the rest of the night, he just sat looking exhausted at the Hands Tied table, drinking from a gallon jug of water. That night I told myself that if I ever did a band and sang, I would be happy if I had a stage presence half as good as his.

On April 19th, Lucuski and company again took the stage, or should I say floor, at the West End Skate Park, located in the small, hick town of Pleasant Valley, only about 20 minutes from my house. Only about 50 people turned out to see them, Rad, Rancor, and Turmoil, as Ignite played in New Brunswick, NJ the same night. But again, Over The Line didn't hold back from bringin' it down, and did so in true style. It was hard to take the show seriously, as much of it was comprised of goof ball 12 year-olds







getting their mosh on as KORN might have liked. OTL tore through a few demo songs and wrapped things up quick with the now signature Side By Side cover. Little did I know that this would be the last time I would get to see these guys do their stuff, as they played a show a few weeks later in York, PA that I couldn't find a ride to.

There was always talk of a show here or there, but nothing came of it. Horner had also written a few new songs, and talked about doing a new 7". The truth was that these guys all lived different places and had a lot of things going on, be it school, work or other bands, and it was a shame things had to fizzle. Crucial Response ended up putting the last song of the demo, "What I Have," on their "For The Sake Of Dedication" comp, featuring two awesome photos, both of which were taken at the Yardley show.

Shortly after, OTL was officially history. Crucial Response pressed the demo onto seven inch, in addition to making t-shirts and posters. The band was never really happy with the artwork on the t-shirts or records, simply because both depicted images of football players, even though no OTL members were football players, nor did they ask for this type of artwork. On the upside though were the photos on the layout of the seven inch, explosive live shots taken from the New Providence show by Justine Demetrick.

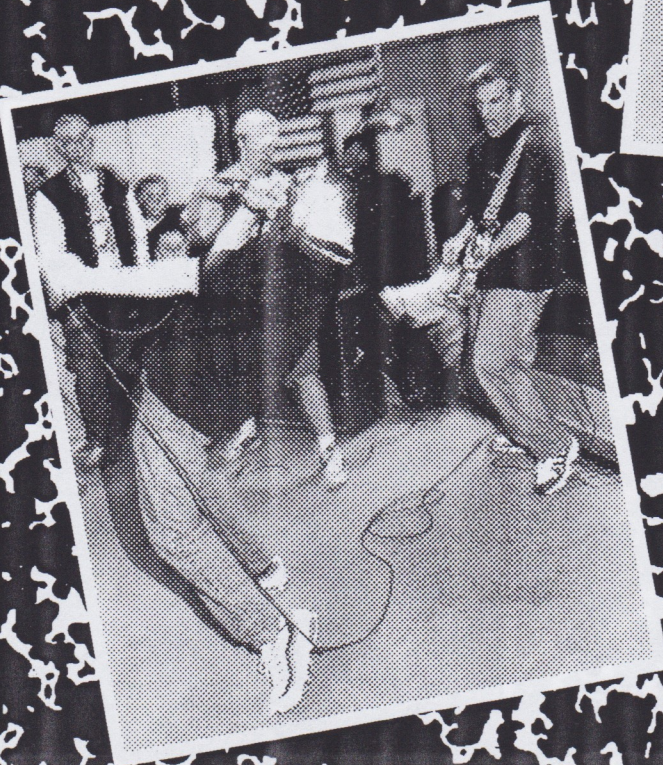
**HOPES  
ARE  
THROWN  
AWAY...**



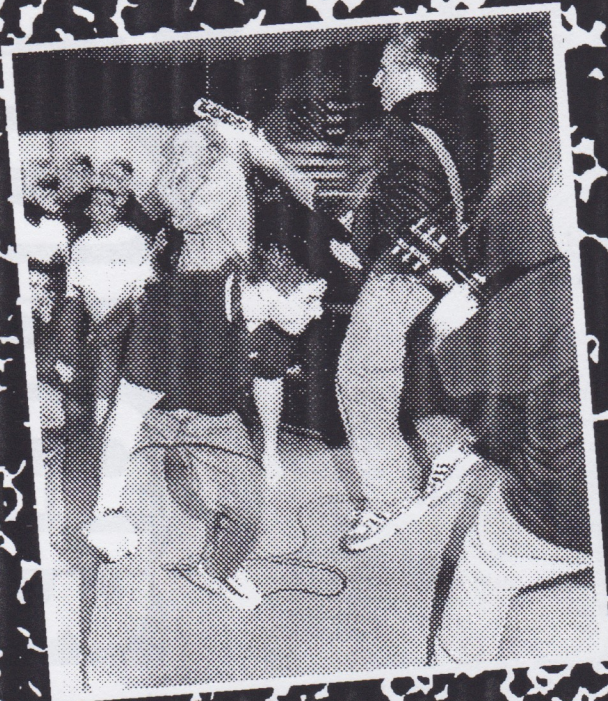
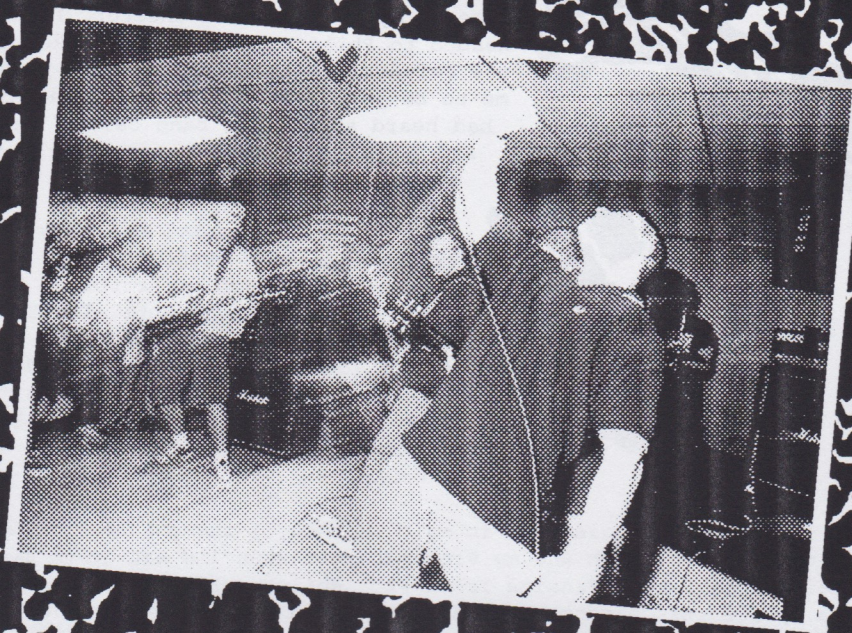


A year or so passed until it looked like Over The Line might not be completely finished with. Horner had been playing around with some new riffs, and had gotten together with a kid named Andy Hartman from PA who was willing to play bass. Lucuski was fired up to get things rolling again, and Dan Servon was ready to get back on the skins. So the four got together at Servon's grandma's house to practice some of what Horner and Andy had come up with. It was described to me as a step away from the demo, with heavy influences drawing on the faster and harder Absolution songs like "Dead And Gone" and "Never Ending Game" mixed with the intensity of Chain and early Turning Point... basically, creating a more developed and technical side of what Over The Line had already done. This was all part of a brief summarization on the Crucial Response Records webpage that talked about the new plans for Over The Line to record another record and start playing out again.

This was at a time when things seemed pretty slow (1999), and trust me, I was crossing my fingers that this would work out. OTL practiced three or four more times, and then things just seemed to dwindle again. Like the first time things ended, this was due much in part to each member having a lot of outside commitments, as well as distance apart from each other.







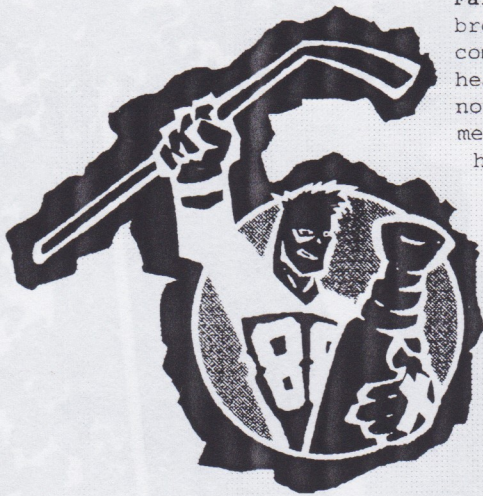
From then  
on, all  
that existed  
to show OTL had  
begun to dig out  
of their grave,  
was a very rough  
practice tape with a  
muffled recording of two

new songs. It wasn't until the summer of  
2001 that I finally got to hear this tape.  
I could have only imagined what these songs  
could have sounded like with vocals and real  
production. A heavy, more technical Absolu-  
tion/Bold "Looking Back"/later Chain sound  
was buried deep within the shoddy sound  
quality. It really made me wish they could  
have been able to work these songs out as a  
final product.

Horner and Lucuski are both friends from that  
time period I still keep in touch with, and  
almost every time we talk, the future of these  
songs is brought up in mysterious, unanswered  
terms. It wouldn't surprise me if somehow those  
songs saw the light of day, the demo having once  
proclaimed, "Don't count us out." These words,  
backed by the intensity of incredible music, left a  
beating on my ear drums which continues to this day.

# ...LOOK AHEAD!





Fall 1995: I hopped in the car with my little brother and his high school friends. They had come to my dorm in West Chester, PA and we were headed to Philadelphia to see Chokehold at the now defunct Stalag 13 space. The show seemed to me to be just another show with one exception: I had heard about this band called Ten Yard Fight and I really wanted to see what they were all about.

Just as I had thought, the show was your typical mid 90's event complete with baggy pants, visors, and other things more suited for a rave. That is until Ten Yard Fight took the stage and proceeded to tear into a set of Youth Of Today style hardcore, they even covered "Expectations." To my disbelief, there was stage diving, pile-ups, floorpunching, etc. Needless to say, I was hooked.

Later that night while hanging out in my dorm room, I thought back to those summer mornings between Junior High and my Freshman year when I'd sit in my room reading and re-reading Smorgasbord Fanzine Issue #2. While pouring over Smorgasbord #2, I'd wish to myself that hardcore could have stayed the way it was when that issue was printed. The music, message, graphics, and style of that era were really appealing to me. Ten Yard Fight was hinting at the type of spirit that I had only caught the tail end of when I first started going to shows in 1989. Somehow that autumn evening gave me a strange feeling that, at least in some small way, my wishes were about to come true.

Not long after that show, I started to notice bands popping up in the Delaware Valley that seemed to be on the same wavelength as Ten Yard Fight. Bands like 97a, Rain On The Parade, & Floorpunch sparked my interest. During the summer of 1996, I received a demo in the mail from Allentown's Rancor; which in turn lead me to find out about Atari. Also, I 'd be a fool not to mention Mouthpiece who were pretty much the only beacon of hope for true hardcore during the early 90's.

The show that really sealed the deal for me would have to be the Scarletts show in Bethlehem, PA on September 15, 1996. This was the first show that I went to that had all of the bands that made the hardcore resurgence popular. The line up: Atari, Rancor, 97a, Floorpunch, Hands Tied, and Ten Yard Fight. At that show it became very apparent to me that a whole new scene was forming. The day before, I had met two middle-aged, married, English travelers at a record store in my hometown, and they had asked what there was to do in the area during the next few days. I gave them a flyer for the Scarlett's show thinking (and laughing) to myself that they'd never care enough to go. Imagine my shock when I saw them the next day at Ten Yard Fight's merch table! What was even more surprising was that they stayed for the whole show and even bought some records.

The '97 era was a really great time for me, I was lucky enough to be there for the rise and fall and I've seen the faces come and go. The pinnacle of 1997 was the Yuletide Fest, December 14th at the 180 Club in Hagerstown, Maryland. This show had Floorpunch, Ensign, Rain On The Parade, Fastbreak, Atari, Rancor & more. All of the photos on the 2nd Rancor 7" were taken at this show.

The era, at least to me, ended at the Revelation showcase in Philadelphia on July 12th, 1998. During that show, I sensed the end of something but I wasn't sure exactly what. Since then many new bands have formed, played, and broken up. Don't get me wrong, hardcore has been awesome since that show, it just felt like a cycle in hardcore was ending. Later that summer, my focus shifted to the West Coast with bands like Lifes Halt & Carry On.

Today hardcore is alive and well and I want to stress that I think hardcore had been great before 1997 and since. I sometimes have to remind myself that the late-90's resurgence has come and gone. Looking back, it all seems like it happened just yesterday.

Dedicated to The Straight Edge,  
Sean Youngblood

# SEAN YOUNGBLOOD



# RAIN ON THE PARADE

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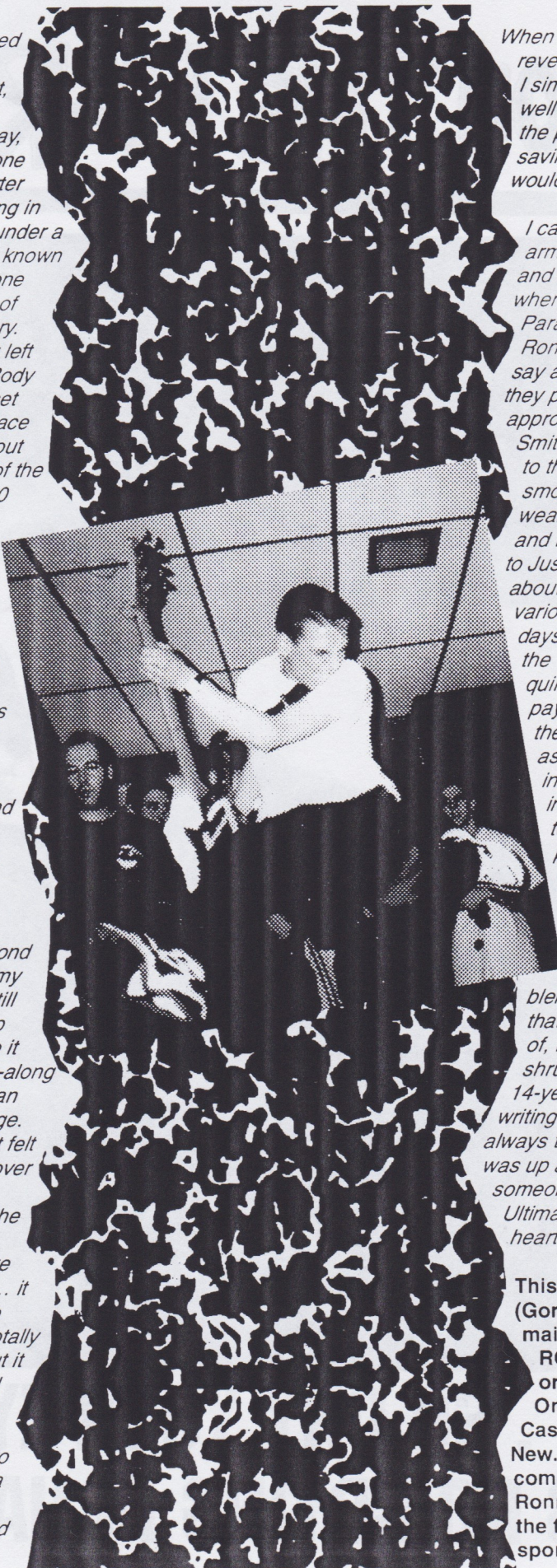


**... SO DRY YOUR EYES.  
THERE'S NO CRYING IN HARDCORE!**



**O**n December 20th, 1997, Mark Porter from Floorpunch whacked that sap Duncan Barlow at a show in Yardley, PA where Up Front, By The Grace Of God, Hands Tied, Rain On The Parade, Saves The Day, and Rad all played. Though everyone has probably heard the story of Porter and select Shore Posse guys walking in and taking care of business in just under a minute and thirty seconds, it is little known (and with good reason), that someone else at the show suffered a little bit of embarrassment and noticeable injury. That person was me, as I broke my left arm on an attempted dive during "Body Bag," the second song of ROTP's set that afternoon. The stage at this place was pretty impressive, standing about three feet high, running the length of the entire end of the building (a good 30 feet), and was pretty deep as well. Basically, it was a perfect stage to fulfill all of your diving dreams if the water proved not to be shallow.

Well, that day I must have been amped up off of the combination of seeing Porter throw a pretty mean right jab, and the sound of ROTP as they opened their set. I forget what they opened with, but there was a pretty decent sing-along, and I remember seeing someone dive and be able to pull it off (there were maybe 25 kids really singing along, just enough heads to land on if calculated properly). So, I was just itching to imitate Gus SE when the situation proved able. ROTP's second song happened to be "Body Bag," my favorite at the time, and probably still one of their best. I was standing up front on the right side, and I believe it was on the first build up of the sing-along when I hopped up the 3 feet wall, ran across the stage and took the plunge. All I remember is bouncing off what felt like one person's head, going ass over tin cups, and landing somewhat inverted, my left upper arm taking the brunt of the impact. A few dudes helped me up, and I couldn't believe that I had dove into an empty pool... it looked perfect upon take off! I also couldn't believe that my arm was totally numb. I tried to just shake it off, but it was useless, it just kind of dropped while everyone wondered what the fuck happened. What was even worse was that I had been itching to see Hands Tied since it had been a while since last time, and I was pushed to the sidelines to just stand and stare as they played next.



When I got home that night the x-rays revealed a broken arm indeed, and I simply told the medical staff as well as my parents I was skating in the parking lot before the show, saving myself the questions that would go along to "stage diving."

I can't help but think about my left arm being in a sling for 4 weeks and the purple shade of my bicep when I think about Rain On The Parade. In addition, I remember Ronny having something witty to say about almost every song before they played it, the fact that DII was approximately 42 years old, Matt Smith bringing the youth crew factor to the band, Chris Ross chain smoking cigarettes in his underwear whenever I was at his house, and how I never once spoke a word to Justin. Of course there were about 16 other members filling various positions towards the later days of ROTP, and truthfully, after the "Full Speed Ahead" 7", I acquired A.D.D. and kind of stopped paying attention to The Rain. But they really lit a spark under my ass around the time of this interview, and it really got me interested in some of the counterpoints that HC is able to provide. The name of the band itself made me go out and find the Half-Off "The Truth" record, even if I realized it sucked anyway. Ronny is quite the character, a pretty unique blend of comedy and intelligence that hardcore doesn't see enough of, in my eyes. He also never just shrugged me off as some annoying 14-year old kid when I first started writing him and talking to him. He always took the time to tell me what was up and not just pass me off as someone a decade younger than him. Ultimately, he put in a lot of fucking heart with this band.

This interview was done by me (Gordo) with Ronny Little via e-mail in March of 1997 with ROTP's Ronny Little. It was originally appeared on Impact Online, and was also used in Casey Kulas's 'zine, Nothing New. Often, e-mail interviews can come out rather shitty and short. Ronny Little, however, is one of the few people that types responses that come out almost



exactly like what you would expect him to say in person. A good interview indeed.

**Well, the usual first question. Who does what, how old are they, how long has everyone been into HC, etc?**

Matt Smith is our bass player. He likes to jump around a whole lot. Justin Phillips plays one of our guitars, and we all think that he wears his guitar strap up a little too high. Dill, hailing from parts unknown, plays our other guitar. Chris Ross is our drummer. He plays really really fast. My name is Ronny Little. I'm the Sarge. I bark out the words, and I make the guys do push-ups at practice. They're in Sarge's Army now.

**There have been some lineup changes that I know of, what were they, and what were the reasons for them?**

The most recent lineup change has been at drums. Bill is a really cool guy, but he's kind of hard to work with. His mind is always going north and south. One week he's into it. The next, he's quitting. Repeat that scenario about twenty times, and throw in the fact that he'd always take a job where he'd have to work on the weekend, and we just all came to the conclusion that it was time to make a move. We picked up Chris Ross, who used to drum for Ensign, and things have been going nicely ever since. Don Devore (Ink and Dagger, Frail) was our bass player on the record, and he played a few shows with us, too. He was doing a few other bands at the time, and we needed someone who was full-time. He agreed to step down, and we brought in Matt, who has worked out better than I could've ever imagined. I'm hoping that this lineup will remain solid for quite a while. I feel really good about the guys I'm working with.

**What has ROTP released so far, I know you have some comp songs, what labels do these appear on?**

We've got the "Body Bag" EP which is on Contention Records. We also gave It's Alive Records, out in California, permission to do a limited pressing of the seven inch. We've got a song on the Growing Stronger compilation called "Class Of 89." That record was

a collective effort put out by In My Blood Records and Teamwork Records. We've also got a song on "The Time Is Now" compilation called "Down In Flames." That record comes with the newest issue of Tension Building Fanzine. We're on the CD sampler that comes with Extent Fanzine #10, but it's a song that's already on the seven inch. We'll be recording our album at the end of this week. That will be coming out on My War Records, which is a new label out of Philadelphia. It's going to have 14 songs on it.

**Were any of the "Body Bag" 7"s pressed on color?**

There's only 100 clear vinyl in the Contention press. Some or all of the It's Alive pressing are red. I'm not sure which. I forgot to ask. All of the records he sent me were red.

**How would you describe ROTP's sound?**

It's really kind of hard to say. One band I'd say that we DON'T sound like is Half-Off. We always get compared to them, which isn't a bad thing. It's just I don't think we sound a thing like them. Maybe lyrically we could be compared to them, simply because the lyrics I choose to write are usually pretty candid, much like Billy Rubin's lyrics, but I think the similarities end there. I think it's pretty hard to nail down a sound for us, just because Justin and I split the song writing, and we're into completely different things. When I pick up my guitar, I'm usually thinking SSD. He's usually thinking Gorilla Biscuits. I don't think we sound like a mix of either, but I love the music we're making.

**Through ROTP and your fanzines, you've had a lot to say about the invasion of metal in HC. What are your opinions on this?**

I have no problem with metal music, or kids listening to metal music. If that's what you're into, fine. Just keep it on the other side of the street. Don't let it get anywhere near hardcore music, because when that happens, for me, hardcore totally gets swallowed up. When I hear a "metallic





hardcore" band, all I hear is the metal in it. I can't hear the "hardcore" in a "hardcore" band like Earth Crisis. All I hear is the metal, and I think the only reason Earth Crisis is titled a "hardcore band" is purely to sell records. How any of those guys can look someone in the eye and say, "yeah, I'm in a hardcore band," just completely amazes me. They don't even come close to sounding like a hardcore band, unless maybe you'd consider Slayer and Pantera hardcore bands. It's metal, so why not just call it metal? I'll tell you why. Because hardcore kids don't buy metal records, unless they're put out by a label like Victory, which packages and then sells them to kids as hardcore bands. Some kids are so easily duped. I'm almost ashamed for them.

**Being that I just touched on the fanzines you do (did), what are they, and does anyone else in the band have any side projects?**

Well, Hardware picked up my services about this time last year. I've been a contributor for the last two issues, and I'll be a contributor for the final issue, which will be #10. From there, I've been asked to be a contributor for a new fanzine called Down In Flames that Mike from Bleed, and Sean from Ink and Dagger are putting together. I'm also supposed to be a columnist for my bass player's fanzine (Contention), but I haven't written anything yet. Between school and Hardware, sometimes I just get burnt out. I can't even begin to imagine what Dave and Brett feel like. They work full-time, and do the ENTIRE zine. Man... as for the other guys, Matt is the bass player for Rancor, and he also runs Contention Records and Contention Fanzine. Justin plays in this weird surf-rock kind of band with his brother and some friends. Chris plays drums in a band called Nora. Dill isn't doing anything on the side that I know of.

**When you set out with ROTP, what did you hope to accomplish?**

Originally? Well, originally I set out to completely destroy everything about the scene that I just couldn't stand. Namely, metal and the shitty attitudes that a lot of kids had. But recently, hardcore has really come around, and I'm not really as angry about the way things are anymore. Originally, I wanted the band to be the musical version of Fuck You Fanzine, but since the scene has pulled out of its nose-dive in the past few years, I don't really feel the need to write those types of songs. Occasionally, I'll whip out an angry little blurb like "Body Bag," but to be honest, I'm more interested in writing songs like "Resolution" and "Fight Back." Songs that are more empowering. While I'm still the kind of guy who has a hard time keeping his mouth shut when the things around him are ridiculous, I must say that I'm picking the shots that I take at people or groups more carefully. I'm more interested in picking kids up off of the ground than I am with throwing them down. But hey, that doesn't mean I won't take my shots at assholes who deserve it. It's just that's not my main focus anymore.

**The song "Just One More" seems kind of sarcastic. What exactly are you saying in it?**

Actually, "Just One More" wasn't meant to be sarcastic at all. I wrote that at a time when all of these really good bands were popping up, along with shows all over the place, and a few cool 'zines here and there. All I was saying is, hey kids, keep it coming. Get involved and the scene will eventually get back to where it should be. "One more band, one more zine, one more show... that's all we need." Basically, all I was trying to do with that song was encourage kids to get involved with playing or pushing the hardcore scene. Real hardcore music. Not that Victory bullshit, or the rock n' roll, emo, or "post" hardcore diarrhea. That's the shit that sent the scene into a death-dive for the past six years.

**You seem pretty up front with saying that your not straight edge anymore in the song "Eating Crow." Could you explain that, and what are your feelings on straight edge?**

Eating Crow was just my way of showing people that making all of these bold statements and promises when you're fifteen years old isn't always the best thing to do. For me personally, all of those sxe promises came back to bite me on the ass. I consciously began calling myself "straight-edge" when I was fifteen years old. At that time, if you had told me that I'd be out partying eight years later, I would have laughed in your face. But by the time I hit twenty-two, and a lot of my friends started hitting the bars, I began to wonder if I was missing something, because I never really did the drinking thing when I was younger. The next year I was hitting the bottle, smoking the occasional bowl, going to the bars, and parties. I wrote "Eating Crow" during that time period as





a sort of warning for kids. Kind of to clue them in on the fact that you may not know exactly what you want out of life when you're a sophomore in high school. I thought I did, but look what happened. I'm not saying it will happen to everybody. Look at guys like Tim McMahon as your proof. But I've seen it happen to a lot of kids. I've also seen it happen to me. It took me about two years to realize that losing my edge was probably one of the biggest mistakes I've ever made. I don't touch anything anymore, but the stain of what I did is still there. Even if nobody else knows it's there... I still know it's there. I don't even like to play "Eating Crow" anymore, just because I think it might encourage kids to look out and see what's beyond the edge. Trust me kids, there's nothing there but bullshit. The only reason we play that song is because I always get out-voted when we're making up the set list. I think I might just start to refuse to play it.

### **What are some things that bother you about the present HC scene?**

The sudden rash of violence that has basically brought the Philly scene to a screeching halt. I don't know if any of you have heard, but the Church is no more. Yep, lost to violence and nothing else. I'm tired of everybody wanting to be "bad." It's retarded. I think it would also be really cool if fights would just come down to contests of one person vs. the other, instead of some poor sucker against somebody's "boyz." Hmm... anything else? Oh yeah, the fact that Victory Records is the biggest "hardcore" label in the land really sticks in my craw. They haven't put out a "hardcore" record in years. It just goes to show that a lot of kids look at the package, instead of what's inside the package.

### **What are your five favorite HC records of all time?**

BL'AST! "The Power of Expression," Dag Nasty "Can I Say," Black Flag "Damaged," Last Rights demo, Antidote "Thou Shalt Not Kill."

### **What's the most rare record that you own?**

I'm not much of a record collector. I've traded away so many records in the past that I WISH I had kept when I think about it now. I didn't even trade 'em away for cool stuff. I'd just traded a lot of stuff to record exchanges for fucking store credit! And yes, I am a dumbass by the way. I'd say the rarest record I own is a first press "Can't Close My Eyes" e.p. that I stole from a radio station. It's got station stickers, and sticker paper with descriptions of the songs on them, and what you can and can't play over the air. It's not a pretty sight. Like I said, I'm not much of a collector. I'd never spend \$40 on a record, unless it came with a free TV or something.

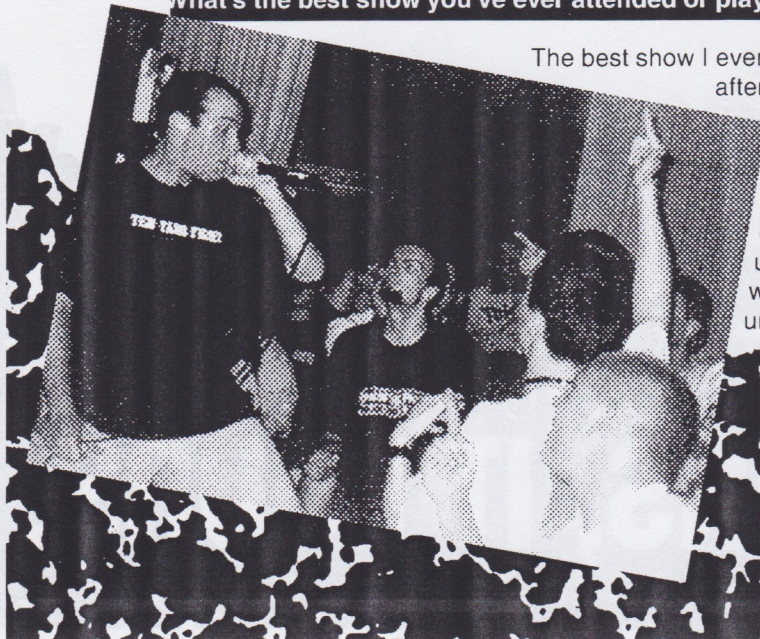
### **Does ROTP play any cover songs? If so, which ones are they?**

We're slowing working on getting "Rain On The Parade" by Half-Off down, but getting my guys to do a cover is like pulling teeth. We're working on it, though.

### **Who are some of your favorite bands to play with?**

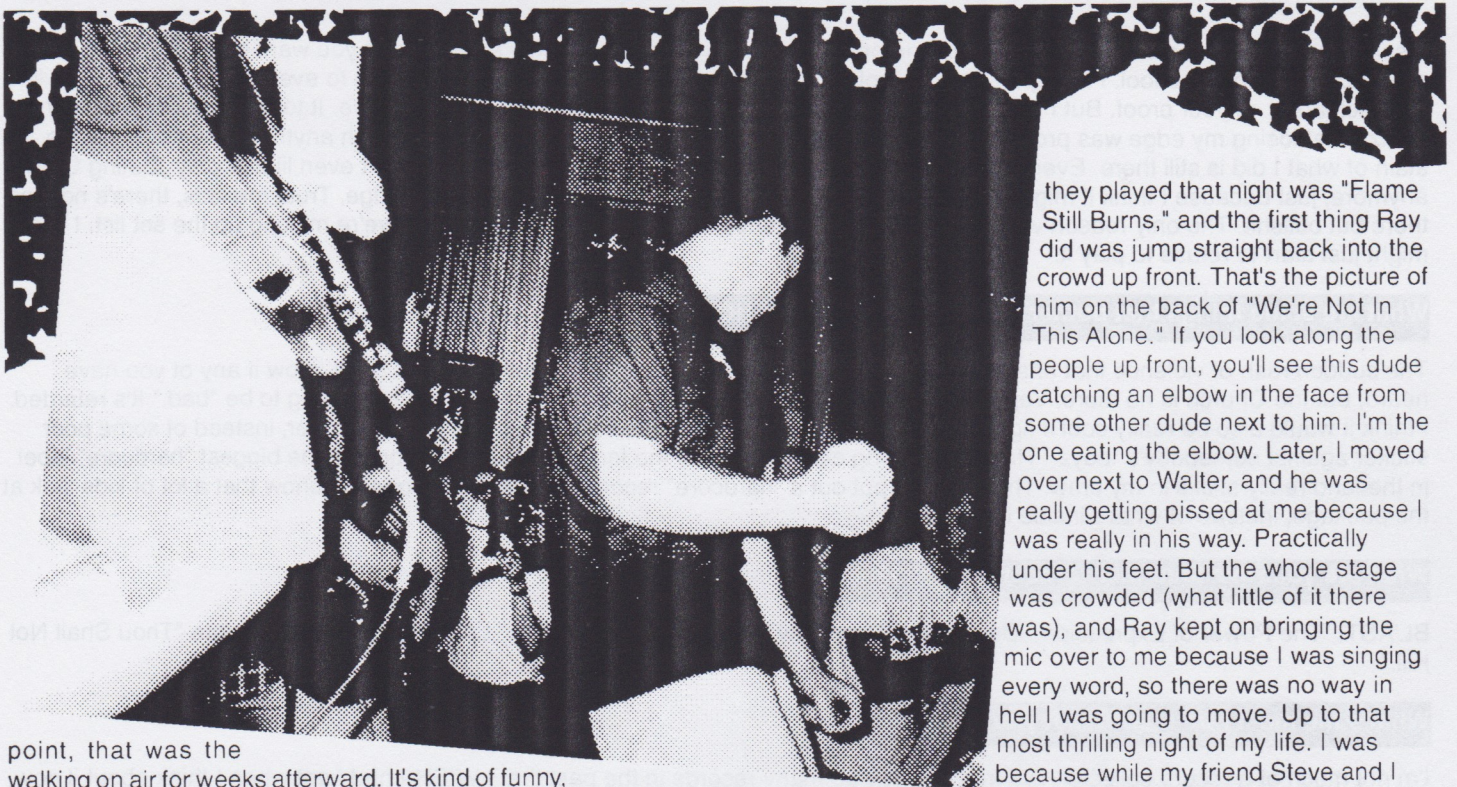
Hands Tied, Floorpunch, 97a, Purpose, Rancor, Atari, Youngblood, Over The Line. Anybody who plays good music. We've played with a lot of other great bands, but his group sticks out the most in my mind.

### **What's the best show you've ever attended or played?**



The best show I ever attended was Youth of Today's very first show back together after they had broken up the first time. It was like the winter/spring of 1988, at a little club in Allentown called Oliver J's. Forthright and Youthful Aggression played as well. They were both local bands. It was the first time I had ever seen Youth of Today, and it was really kind of a religious kind of experience for me, because at that time, I had never looked up to anybody the way I had looked up to Ray. To say I worshiped the guy would've been a huge understatement. The first song





point, that was the walking on air for weeks afterward. It's kind of funny, were standing around before Y.O.T. went on, Steve spotted Ray and Porcell in pictures up until that night. So Steve's like, "Whoa, there's Ray and Porcell!" I took a look around and didn't see them, so I was like "where?" Steve is amazed that I can't see them, and he's like, "right THERE!" I still couldn't see them, and I was really getting frustrated, so Steve finally says, "look right NEXT to YOU." I looked to my right, and then I adjusted my line of vision downward a couple of inches, and there was Ray and Porcell. Instead of Ray being the tanned and hulking crew cut guy that was on the back of "Break Down The Walls," he was short, pale, and had bleached hair. Instead of Porcell being the bleached, flat-top, not so muscle-bound dude from the back of "Break Down The Walls," he had his hair natural, and he was short, tan, and built. I remember that night like it just happened. Another funny thing that happened was that my girlfriend at the time, and a friend of hers were up front, and Ray kept giving them the mic. At some point, he was like, "It's nice to see girls up front at shows, singing along!" Then the crowd cheered it's approval. Later, Charlene and her friend told me they were just screaming "la-la-la" because they didn't know the words. Charlene was into Crass. I don't even think she had heard of Youth of Today up until that night. I've never been to a show like that since. There's been some good ones, but nothing that could equal that show, which is kind of weird when you think that it was Youth of Today and a couple of local bands.

#### **Any future plans for ROTP?**

Record. Play Shows. Repeat that formula until we're through.

#### **That's about it. Any closing comments or thanks?**

Thanks for the interview, Gordo. Impact is quite an accomplishment. It's amazing that the Internet is such a vast territory, yet you guys have managed to be the only people to put something cool on it. I really hope you guys keep it up. Kids can tune into Impact to see how it's done...

# WHEN IT RAINS, IT POURS.



1) ...That on the cover of the Judge LP, if Porcell is really rockin' out that hard, then what is everybody in the crowd looking at?

2) ...That on the back of the Chain Of Strength reissue CD/LP, Curtis is wearing something similar to spandex and a tanktop, perhaps he just left the gym?

3) ...That Richie on the back of the BDTW LP is wearing burlap, plaid pants, perhaps because he was "not like you?"

4) ...That the SOIA 7" was a Revelation release, due in most part to Ray Cappo, despite the fact that the song "The Deal" is about Ray and his goofy little band, YOT?

5) ...That on the back of the s/t YOT 7", Ray is wearing sweat pants and dress shoes? The scary part is, he actually kind of pulls it off.

6) ...That on the back of BOLD's "Looking Back," the kid diving in the center with a black jacket is missing a head?

7) ...That Neil is on the cover of In My Eyes' "Nothing to Hide" LP, despite not having played on the record?

8) ...That the young man on the back of the 97a "Abandoned Future" LP is about to play Chris' meat-whistle?


9) ...That on Shelter's "Perfection of Desire," the layout uses two YOT pictures?

10) ...That on the CD version of the "Way It Is" comp, the top, left-hand corner of the back cover shows 2 dangling, barefoot legs that look like they belong to either a floating manequin, or a lifeless, overweight woman?

11) ...That on the back of the BOLD 7", everyone is stylin' except Matt, who has a serious case of bed head?

12) ...That the drawing on the cover of the Uprise 7" features a crew member strikingly similar to Bill of Floorpunch?

13) ...That, on the Statue LP, there is no further explanation of what playing "the trapp" is, exactly?



**did  
you ever  
notice?**



# HANDS

This interview was done by former IMPACT team member, Brian Meryweather, originally appearing in his zine, Finish Line. Pete and I felt that this marked the end of the road for HT, and was a solid, lengthy interview that showed their position in hardcore in 1998. Brian talked to Tim McMahon, Ed McKirdy and Dan Hornacker on February 21, 1998 shortly after The Tied set at the YWCA in Philadelphia, PA.

This was their first show back in the states after their European Tour, and the response in Philly was less than enthusiastic. I remember looking around at the show and realizing that the NJ/Philly scene was truly starting to dwindle, and HT was one of the first bands to take the brunt of it. Just months prior, they were rocking out to the most exuberant of tri-state area straight edge hardcore kids. Pile-ons, stage dives, and fists-in-the-air sing alongs were commonplace at almost every HT show I saw... up until this one. The YWCA had a perfect stage, and I was one of the only people to use it to it's full potential. The Tied covered "Youth Crew," and people just watched and fucking stared. They just didn't seem to care. This ended up being the final Hands Tied show, until the 2001 Positive Numbers Fest reunion set.

Say what you fucking want, this band was about full-fledged, straight edge hardcore bringing together energy, integrity, emotion, sincerity, and style. And they said it best...

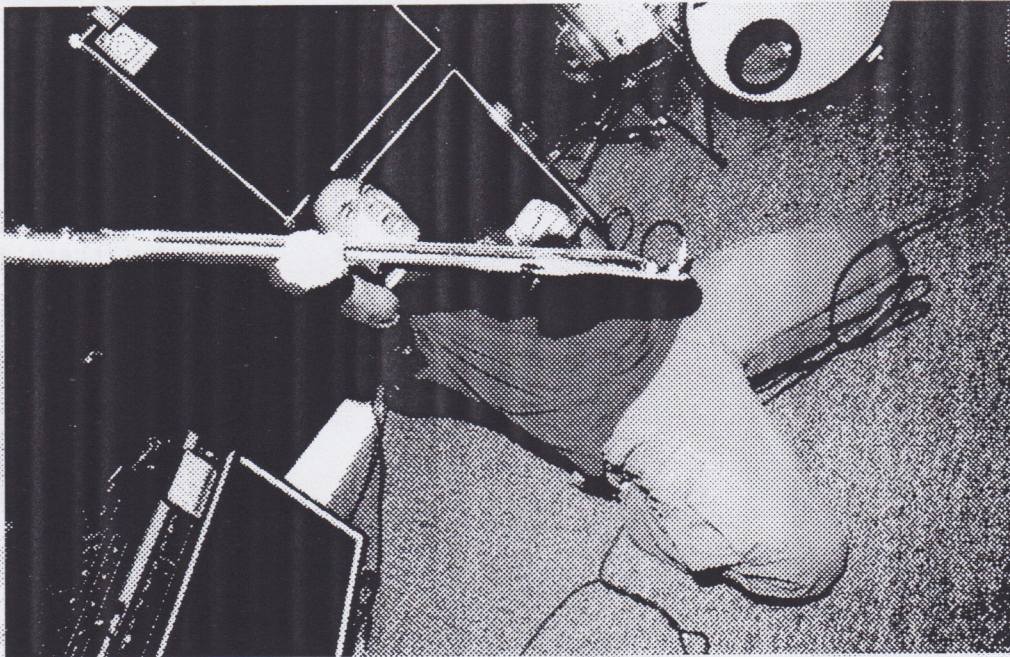


**NOTHING CAN FUCKIN' COMPARE!**



# TIED

## THE FINAL DAYS



Alright, there's been a lot of member changes goin' on in Hands Tied, would you like to run down what's going on?

Ed: Well, initially, we started with Pat, this skater kid, named Pat Guidotti, and Sean, who was like the last bass player in Mouthpiece, and things just didn't work out with those guys. So we got... who did we get next?

Tim: Matt...

Ed: Yeah, we got Matt Smith and a fellow from Norway named Espen came out to play for us. He, unfortunately, had to leave because his visa ran out in this country. So we were playing for a while with just Matt, Geoff... oh, I forgot to mention Geoff. This kid from Sayreville, who's been around for a long time, joined the band after Pat left and things didn't work out... as far as Espen, his visa ran out and

everything, so...

Tim: He was kind of forced to go back and establish some kind of citizenship, or something like that to get back. We got Dan to fill in while Espen was gone, so the line-up was Ed bass, me, Tim on vocals, Geoff drums, Dan guitar, Matt guitar. And then we had some problems with Matt, so Matt ended up leaving the band and...

Ed: Without Espen, it didn't really sound as thick with just Matt.

What exactly happened with Matt and you guys?

Tim: Really what happened was we got Dan to fill in for us while Espen was gone because we weren't able to play with just Matt... I mean, I guess we could have, but we've practiced and stuff but...

(The alarm goes off in the car and Ed doesn't know how to fix it... he fools around with it for a minute or two until it stops as he waves to the on-lookers...)

Tim: But anyway... yeah, so when Espen left, we kept practicing with Matt, I mean Matt is a cool kid, but he just wasn't strong enough a guitar player for us to play as a four piece. So, we've known Dan for a while and asked him if he would like to fill-in so we could play some shows and after a while Dan pretty much said he wanted to be in the band. He wanted to do the band. We still had Espen who had planned on coming back, so then we went from having the problem of having no guitar players to having too many guitar players. We kind of looked at it like this... at least Matt has another band, Matt has Rain On The Parade, so it's not like he doesn't



have anything going on. So like, Geoff and I have been friends with Dan for like years so it was cool doing a band with him again and he was able to write songs for us a lot faster and better than how things were going, because Matt wasn't really writing a lot of songs for us. So basically we were going to Europe and like I said, we were stuck with having three guitar players and we had to make a decision, what are we going to do? Is Dan going to go with us to Europe or is Espen going to play with us in Europe? Is Matt going to go to Europe? So we just decided, in the long run, that things will work out the best if we keep Dan, if Dan wants to be in the band,

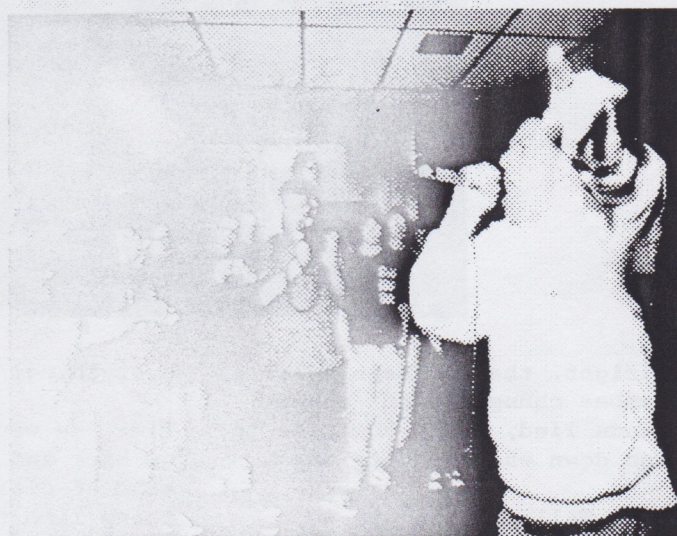
and Sean... you know, whatever. We don't have any problems with anybody, everybody's cool. The band was kind of the thing that kept us together as far as our thoughts, for the most part, we weren't really friends who hung out all the time, you know what I mean? That's kind of the problem, once they left, we just didn't see each other much, so...

I just read in an interview with Tim that said that the Matt Smith line-up was your most solid one, even in Mouthpiece, you never really had a solid line-up going. Do you feel this line-up is better... and here to stay?

didn't always mesh, whereas, at that time we really had a strong unit. Unfortunately, it wasn't the best sounding unit we ever had, that was one of the problems. Right now, we have a pretty solid line-up, we're definitely writing the best songs we've ever written, thanks to Dan, I definitely think that this is the best line-up we've had, hopefully it stays this way.

So is Espen coming back, or is he just in Sportswear?

Tim: We really don't know. He wants to come back. I think we'd like him to come back, but there's just so many problems getting over here and becoming a citizen, even just



Dan will stay in the band, when we go to Europe Espen will play for us. At least Matt has said on the radio and he's got other things going on. So... I mean it was a tough decision to make, it's not one we really enjoyed making but it just came down to that. We kind of weighed our decisions and options, that's what we really tried to do.

**Is every** he still on good grounds with the past members?

Tim: Um... I guess I mean, speaking for myself, I don't really talk to anybody. I haven't talked to Matt since he left the band, I see him once in a while, our drummer,

Tim: Um... yeah... I mean, as far as when I said that line-up was a solid line-up, really what I meant was that we had five, totally dedicated kids who were, pretty much all on the same wavelength, knew what we wanted to do and had the same goals. We thought we could accomplish what we wanted to do. That's pretty much what I meant, 'cause with Mouthpiece, it would always be me, Chris, and Jason, the three original guys, and we would have these scattered, named guys coming through here and there who would like... these gypsy guitar players passing through (laughter), and sometimes we didn't see eye to eye with everybody, you know, nothing personal, things

coming over here to stay for just a couple months, everything is just a big hassle. One, he doesn't have a car over here, he's got to get a job over here, find a place to live, there's just all kinds of things he has to deal with. And really, speaking for myself, I'm too busy to really concentrate and try to work things out with him. I'm busy with my own life. Everybody else, I think they're pretty much in the same boat. We can't really take him under our wings. Nobody can really afford to have him live at our houses, drive him around and everything. If he can get citizenship and he can get over here and thinks he can make it work then cool, right



now things are kind of up in the air, we'll just see what happens.

So Dan, how do you feel about being a four-piece, do you think you can take care of the guitar duties, or do you think you need another person to fill in?

Dan: I think I can handle it. Guitar-wise, I've been in more demanding situations, but I like the sound of the four-piece. I like it better than a five-piece. It's tighter and I like to hear the bass more as an instrument, rather than most hardcore bands with these huge guitar amps and the bass player just plays the same thing as guitar, it just

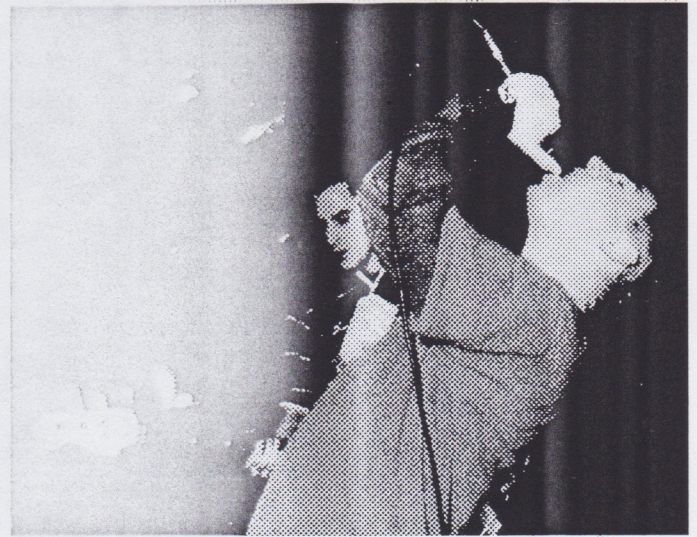
it's just like night and day. You go over there and first of all, you just get off the plane and you have a tour manager bringing us to this big, huge luxury tour bus, with bunk beds and a driver loading our equipment on. We get to the show and the afternoon before the show starts they have breakfast for us, we load in, get a sound check. Every place we played was a club, had a stage, a sound system, a soundman, just so well organized. We set up our merchandise, get to hang out in every city we're in and then come back. We get dinner at five o'clock, it's unbelievable... and all of this is paid for, including our flight out there.

ing to play for like three or four-hundred kids, five-hundred kids who were really into us during it. We've played in bands in New Jersey for like eight years now, nine years. Playing New Jersey there are like fifty people up front. Playing Belgium for the first time, there are four-hundred and fifty kids the first time, seven-hundred kids the second time.

Ed: There's just more respect over there, it seems like kids appreciate what we're doing more over there than here.

Tim: They don't get it, like people over here just...

Ed: Take it for granted.



sounds kind of boring, it's not even like a real band. It's just kind of cheesy I think. I don't think we've run into any real problems so far with that sound... well you tell me... I mean not sound heavy enough...

I think it's fine... I mean... Alright, let's talk about Europe, I know that was a major goal in Hands Tied, so how did everything turn out?

Dan: Pretty well...

Tim: It was incredible. Europe is unbelievable. For an American band who is used to playing in America and getting treated like you do over here, to go over there

Did the guys from Equal Vision do that?

Dan: No one paid our way, we just got advanced and all of the money got paid back from all of the shows.

Did they set it all up for you?

Tim: M.A.D., it's a booking company over there, they set everything up for it. Equal Vision basically talked to M.A.D., it's like we want these bands over there and they do it. So we got the airline tickets and everything else got taken care of.

Dan: It was pretty invigorat-

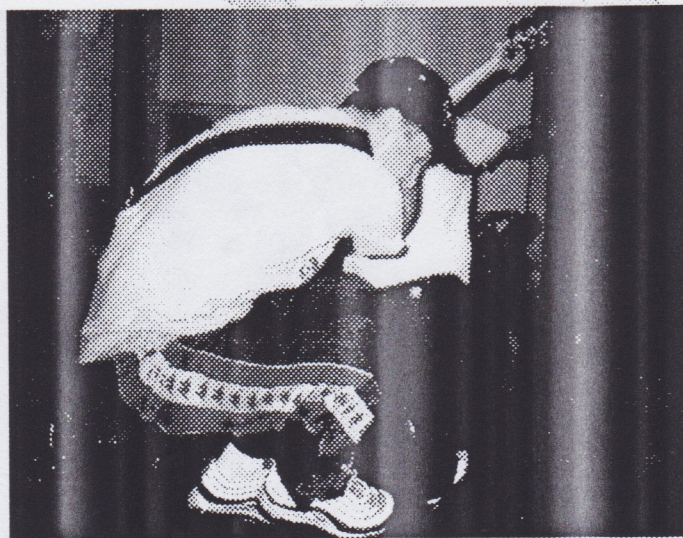
Tim: They take it for granted, there's just so many attitudes, everybody thinks they are cooler than this guy and this guy isn't now... everyone just respects American bands, here they just don't get it. For the most part, I'd say almost all of our shows we've had between three-hundred and seven-hundred people. The shows where there were three-hundred people, there were like one-hundred-fifty kids, two-hundred kids up front singing along. Shows where there were seven-hundred people, there would be five-hundred people up front. I'm not talking just packed in there, these kids were up front diving,



dancing, singing along... knowing every word, it's unbelievable, it's the whole package, just incredible. Then you come back here and play a show like this where there's a lot of people, but everyone just stands in the back, stares at you, and...

Dan: Gives you the finger.

Tim: Gives you the finger you know? There's just so many attitudes... I really didn't know how bad it was here until you go over there and realize how good it is. There were a couple of record labels and these guys were at every show, putting out all of the bands over there, these guys are just on top of things.



Dan: It's definitely not just a good scene for American bands, because everyone's like, European bands are shitty... we played with a lot of good bands... Eyeball, Sportswear, Thumbs Down, they were really good. Who else did we play with... I like Mainstrike. There's a pretty strong scene, independently, kids are just so much more supportive.

Tim: They are genuinely interested and dedicated to it. Almost every show I met a guy who was over thirty years old, who has kids, was married and like...

Dan: Still in hardcore.

Tim: I'm not exaggerating, I met so many kids who were like "I went around to every Youth Of Today show, I went around to every Gorilla Biscuits show, and now I am going to every Hands Tied show." You don't find that over here.

Ed: Here, you're even lucky if someone says good set... seriously. I walked through a crowd of people, just got done playing, and I'm not saying I'm expecting anybody to fucking hand me money or anything... we just got done playing and kids don't even get out of your way, let alone say good set or anything like that. It's just a lack of respect here as compared to

awesome.

Yeah, I know, I get to see you guys like once or twice a month but I can imagine having to wait for you guys to go over there...

Tim: We had kids from Norway who followed us around...

Dan: They drove like thirty-six hours.

Ed: Trains overnight.

Tim: Literally, they traveled to like fifteen shows. These kids were driving...

Dan: Paying to get in.

Tim: Yeah, I'd be like "Hey,



there, and like he said, you don't realize how good you have it.

Tim: I know people are going to read this interview and probably think "these guys are fucking bloated heads and think so high of themselves and expect to be treated like this"... but I'll tell you what, you go over there and you just see what it's like, you have to really experience it to really know. I had heard this and I had heard that, I really never knew exactly what it was going to be like. It's definitely incredible and like I said, if you're in a band and have a chance to go over there, try to do it because it's fuckin''

want me to put you on the guest list?"... "Ah no, no, no, man. We know you need the money." It's crazy! After like six shows of seeing the same kid it's like, "Hey, man! I'll put you on the guest list if you want." I just can't say enough good things about it.

So do you think your favorite show would be over there, or do you have one that still sticks out more in the US?

Tim: For me, as far as Hands Tied shows, we've definitely played our best shows over there... I mean, I've played some fucking good Mouthpiece shows over here...



Dan: Some of those shows over there actually held a candle to some good Mouthpiece shows over here in the Mouthpiece hey-day.

Tim: Some of the best Mouthpiece shows were pretty much like most of the Hands Tied shows over there. So as far as I'm concerned, yeah, we've definitely, I think, we've played our best shows over there.

I know you guys put out a special seven inch with the Project X cover, how did that come about?

Tim: Our record has been out for two years. We really didn't have anything to sell

was kind of scarce and we really just wanted to have something special. We didn't sell them in the US, we only sold them there.

Tim: We said, "Why don't we do three-hundred colored vinyl records?" Then our drummer Geoff, he works at a silk screen company, he was like "I'll silk screen the covers." It kept going down to these little things... "How 'bout we do this, how 'bout we do that?" We were just so busy the days, the weeks leading into this before we left. It really ended up being the night before we were leaving, we were like "We still have to do all of this. We've got to layout a cover, go screen

looks fucking awesome!" (Laughter). And I was like "Are you serious?" He's like, "Yeah, that's the fucking best idea I've seen so far." I'm like, "Whatever, it looks kinda cool, let's just fucking do it, just for the fun of it." So we just did it. We got down there and sold all of our records in the first three days. We probably could have used a thousand of them. We could have easily sold that many. The second show we played was one of the biggest shows we played. There were like seven-hundred people there. Almost everyone who bought one bought them two at a time. Some people bought like fifteen, twenty. The guy from Crucial Response was



over there, we didn't have a new record out.

Dan: Plus the distribution is really bad in Europe, EVR distributes exclusively though Rev and a company called Semiford does all of Rev's distribution there. Semiford didn't pay Rev on a huge invoice so Rev said, ok, we're not sending you any more records. So when we got to Europe, people couldn't buy our seven inch for the last six months, so no one could get our record, they couldn't really even promote us and say go out and buy the seven inch because you can't get the seven inch.

Dan: So we knew the seven inch

three-hundred covers and fold them." We still had to do all this shit. Then, like me and Ed were sitting at my house trying to get together a layout, and I pulled out the Project X seven inch...

Ed: A little inspiration...

Tim: I said, "Alright, it's gonna be a folded cover with the lyrics on one side and the back cover on the other side." So I got the Project X seven inch out just to see how it was set up, and joking around I typed out Hands Tied in the same font Project X was and the songs...kind of laid it down and was like "Hey, what do you think of this?," joking around...and Ed goes, "That

like, "I'm buying twenty of these because I know they are going to be worth something." Three days later we're playing a show and people are like, "Hey, did you hear about Peter from Crucial Response? He traded one of those for a Judge Schism 7." We were like, "WHAT?!" Before we knew it, it was getting out of hand. People would come up to me and be like, "Can I buy two of them?" "Alright, you can buy two." Then they would go up to Geoff and say, "Tim said I could buy five of them."

Dan: It was cool for once that, I don't know how many kids in the United States will want it, but you always hear of kids in Europe paying out-



rageous money and ridiculous trades for stuff, it's just cool that they got it. Now it's gone, and for once, those guys get something cool.

**So what are plans for recording now?**

Dan: We have enough songs for a seven inch and we could do an LP really easily...what are we trying to do really? What's holding us back?

Tim: Trying to decide if we want to do an EP or if we want to do an LP. The Hands Tied seven inch has been out for two years, we really haven't done a hell of a lot for this band. We play, we've gone to Europe, we've played some

LP, we can still write the songs in a matter of a couple weeks.

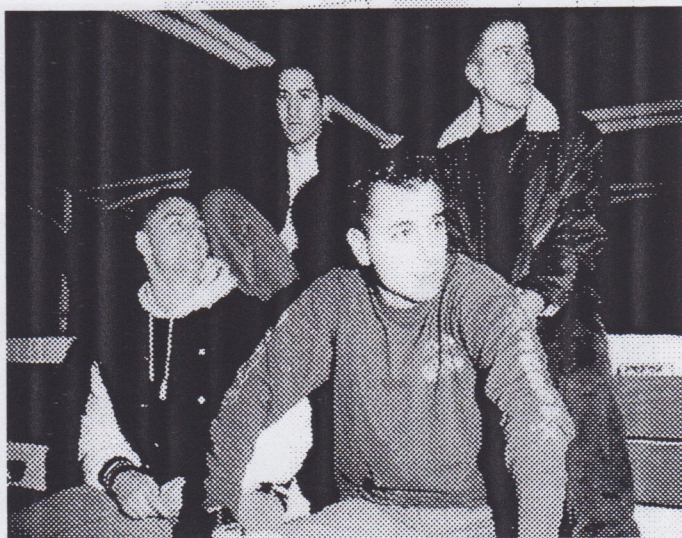
Dan: I think part of what's holding us back is we're not really sure what we want to do, we want to tour with a lot of different bands. It's kind of like a breaking point, obviously our music is the same, if you've heard any of the new songs it's the same exact style as the other ones. It's just that we're really striking out playing these kinds of shows. Like around here we just don't get any respect. We can play a million shows and kids just either aren't into it or I don't know what. We're looking to travel and get out of

bands and there were a lot of people there. We played a show in New York City, it was pretty rad, we played a show in DC, which was awesome, we played a show in...

(These two guys walk up to the car...Tim opens the door and they were like, "Hey we got some EQ man...". Tim said we were doing an interview and they walked away. I really hope he knew who those people were...)

Ed: I think we're actually parked outside a crack house right now...

Tim: So anyway, what was I saying?



shows, but we really haven't played that much because of all these problems and member changes we've had with the band...really what we need to do is get a record out soon. We can't really record a record and wait like fuckin' six months until it comes out. For those six months we are just gonna be sitting on the back burner doing nothing. We're going to be playing shows, but it's gone be like this every night. So, right now we're just trying to decide what we can do to get a record out in less than six months. We want to get a record out soon, we have the songs. If we can do the seven inch, then do it, if it comes down to it and we can do an

New Jersey and maybe go back to Europe, we want to go out with bigger bands.

Tim: That's really the key to it, we played like five shows before we left for Europe who were set up by this guy Tim Borror who does booking for a lot of bigger bands like Shelter...who else does he book for? Wu-Tang Clan? I don't know.

Ed: Probably. (Laughter).

Tim: He books H2O and Burn I guess. So we talked to him and he was able to get us on a few shows before we left, and they were like the best shows we've played. Because we were playing with these bigger

**Playing with bigger bands...**

Tim: Yeah, so we were playing these good shows so the bottom line was, they were set up well...

Dan: Promoted well.

Tim: Promoted well and were very successful shows. Really, most of the shows Hands Tied has played have been kids booking shows at VFW halls, but there's nothing else going on, it gets into a vicious cycle. These VFW halls, really, these kids can't afford to get these bigger bands out there.

Dan: Or like a good PA.



Tim: A good PA, a stage.

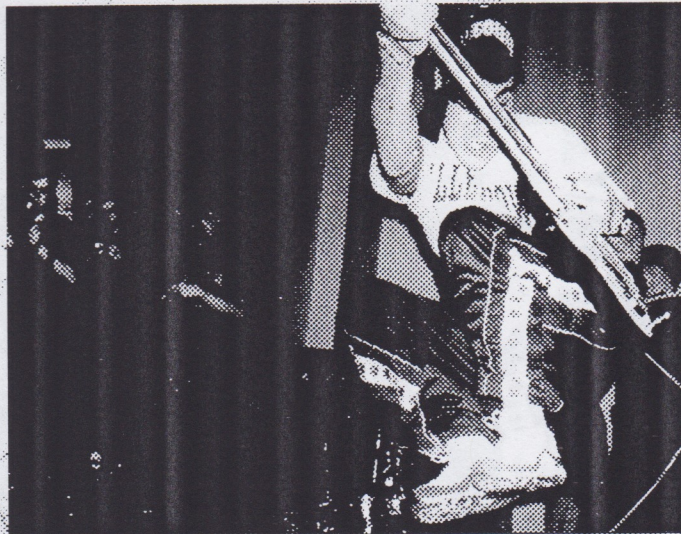
Dan: Promote the show properly.

Tim: Kids just kind of get bored of it. I may not be, but a lot of other kids... you can just see them, they're falling off, they're getting sick of coming to all these shows. It's cool to have Robby Redcheeks doing a show here, this place has a stage, it's got a sound system, he's getting some bigger bands... we need more people like this. Everyone's thinking like, "Hey, I'm doing my part, DIY, putting on a show in my fuckin' grandma's basement." But it's really getting pretty slow. The big bands aren't

get more enjoyment out of playing where kids don't give us the finger and stuff like that. We've played with H2O, the shows were great, we've played with Better Than A Thousand, the shows were great, we've played with Murphy's Law, where we showed up late and had to play after Murphy's Law. A lot of kids still stuck around to check us out.

Ed: Plus, it exposes us to a lot of kids who would have never heard us before and these kids have enough respect to at least be intrigued by it. They're not walking away during our set or giving us the fuckin' finger or anything like that.

have attitudes, they're just like, "Ah, fuck you, Hands Tied, I don't want to see them because they wear..." something stupid you know what I mean? It's just a bunch of fuckin' attitudes. When me and Ed got Geoff and Matt and we started playing again after the first line-up, all Geoff was hearing was bullshit, like, "How can you be in that band, man? Are you sure you look the part? Do you dress the part, wear the right sneakers? What about the hair?" People just care about these stupid things. Like, "All those guys care about are their sneakers." It's bullshit. If all I cared about were my sneakers, why would I be doing a band? Why would I be in



coming through and the smaller bands are just playing and people are just getting bored of it, something has to happen. I'm speaking mainly of New Jersey. I guess it could apply to this whole little area, New Jersey, and locally Pennsylvania, stuff like that. It's just a vicious circle.

Dan: The shows we've played, that I think have been the better shows, have been when we played with bands where like, guys we know who were in other straight edge bands in New Jersey were like, "Ah, that show is gonna suck, it's not going to be real hardcore kids. H2O are just a bunch of fifteen year-old kids." We

Dan: Even if you want to walk away, fine...

Ed: You can walk away... you don't owe me anything, if you don't like it, then you don't like it. These kids at these bigger shows seem to be, at the very least, intrigued.

Tim: It's something new. You have these bigger bands like H2O Playing, who have videos on MTV, all these people who don't know anything about bands like us go to these shows and they're honestly interested. Whereas, you play one of your little DIY shows, where it's all the local hardcore kids and stuff. Sixty percent of them just

hardcore for twelve years? Why am I still here doing this? The point is, all these people care too much about all these stupid little things. Like how short my hair is, or how much fucking... whatever, it's just stupid stuff. When we play shows with the bigger bands and there are a lot more kids coming, they don't know any better, their minds are open to it.

Dan: The bands themselves, they like it, like, "Yeah we want expensive equipment, we want tour support." Like when we play with bigger bands, they're not surprised by that, they're accustomed to that, that's the standard. I kind of like being in that mix a



little better. When we played with H2O, we get food at the show, we get a dressing room, we get water, we get towels. This isn't some crazy thing, it's not being a rock star, it's nothing. A kid who does a show in his fucking garage thinks it's a fucking big deal to buy a band a bottle of water...that isn't shit dude. We've been doing bands for a long time; honestly, we're starting to put a lot of effort into this band. We just want something in return. That VFW thing is awesome, but I've been in a lot of bands, they've been in bands, we've been through that fame already. We want to still do that and move to the next level. It's funny, when we

Dan: Better Than A Thousand, Civ, Shelter, 7 Seconds, Ignite, Sick Of It All... like, we want to tour with all hardcore bands, we'd like to play...like I'd like to play an arena...(laughter). We're not shooting for an arena, we just want to try to get to the next level and do what it takes.

I just was wondering about some of your lyrics...especially the song "Rearrange?"

Tim: "Rearrange?" Yeah, I can honestly tell you where that song came from. For the most part, all the lyrics I write, every song, they come from a personal experience. If it's not about a certain person, it's about a certain

it. That's all it's about. To me, when I sing it, and when I get up on stage, I don't think about what I originally wrote it about. But, I can apply it to like, ten-thousand other things now.

I know you guys get on the Internet... what's your response to people who go under a fake name with no e-mail or no way to reply to them and...

Tim: It's just bullshit. The internet's just kind of a joke though, it's hard to take it seriously.

Dan: We like it... honestly.

Ed: It's a good time...



say that people give us shit, like, "Oh, you guys want to be rock stars." H2O's on Epitaph, and everyone loves them, but if a straight edge wants to do something it's like, "That's beat." We don't owe it to anyone to be poor for the rest of our lives.

So if you guys were going on tour, what would be your ideal bigger band to go with?

Ed: Pearl Jam.

Tim: Yea, the Spice Girls.

Dan: Stuff we like like...what would you say?

Tim: Better Than A Thousand.

experience. I just don't go, "Ok, today I want to write a song about friendship, today I want to write a song about vegetarianism." I live something, and if it motivates me enough to write about it, I do. A song like "Rearrange" is pretty much about, through college, I've been taking this math class forever, I took it like three times and I kept failing it, and math is like my weakest part. I finally fuckin' buckled down, got my shit together, and passed it. Honestly, that's what that song is about, and you can apply it to anything. When there are things in life you keep failing at and you want to win, you got to put your mind to it and just fucking do

Dan: If people want to talk shit about us, I said it right on the internet, it helps us sell records and t-shirts. No one really cares about us, so when people talk shit about us...

Ed: At least it gets our name out there, you know.

Dan: It's makes us happy, we're like, "All right!" (laughter).

Tim: That's all fine, but a lot of times, people just start taking personal shots. Like, "That Tim, he's an asshole."

Ed: Or, "We're gonna clean



his clock."

Tim: It's just a bunch of bullshit, I haven't met one person, tons of people talk shit to the point where I don't even get on. I get on the internet, but I don't go to any hardcore homepages anymore, check any message boards. Everybody that did talk shit would never tell me who they were, like "I'll beat you up at show fucker." Go ahead, I'm the one that's up on stage, apparently you know who I am, I don't know who you are. Come up to me, say something to me... I mean whatever... I'll fuckin' beat your fuckin' ass. I mean I'm not a fucking violent person, but if you're going to rip on me and

hardcore for twelve years, I really don't care what some little kid on his computer thinks about me...honestly. Chances are, regretfully, I'll be in it longer than he will. So, what do we care what some kid who doesn't even know us says? Like, "those guys, they wear expensive sneakers." Good observation. Yeah, we do, who cares? It's flattering that people are preoccupied thinking about us.

So what's the whole thing with Justin from Indecision?

Dan: Nothing...

Tim: Some people say it's him, some people say it's just someone else using his name.

Tim: I actually told Steve to write that, "From the ashes of Mouthpiece...", "really, all it is advertising is. Like, "I did a band for six years, I'm doing a new band and for all the people that liked Mouthpiece, check out."...

Ed: It's like when Shelter played at City Gardens for the first time and it said "featuring Ray and Porcell from Youth Of Today."

Dan: It basically said Youth Of Today.

Ed: I was there... with bells on.

Tim: For all the people who care, it works, for people who



talk shit on me, and fuckin' say it like there's not going to be any...

Dan: Repercussions.

Tim: ...Repercussions from it, come up to my face and talk shit to me, maybe I'll talk it out with you, but if you're going to be a fucking cock and talk about how you're gonna clean my clock, I'm gonna put my fuckin' foot in your fucking face. (ed. note: Tim says "fuck" 8 times in 1 sentence... wow.)

Ed: As well as like four other guys too.

Dan: Really, what it boils down to is, I've been into

Dan: Someone said our band sucked, which probably happens about a million times every day or so...

Alright, this is basically for Tim and Ed, I know you really don't have any control over it, but earlier, when you were just starting out, how fliers for shows and stuff would say, "Hands Tied, ex-members of Mouthpiece and The Suppression Swing." Even on that Equal Vision ad for you guys said like, "From the ashes of Mouthpiece, this is what lies ahead." What do you feel about that? Like they're trying to sell you as an extension of the two?

don't care, it doesn't work.

Ed: There's got to be marketing, even in hardcore.

Dan: We don't write records to try and not sell any of them.

Ed: If we sold a million records, we wouldn't be upset by it at all, we're not going to drink booze if it's cool or sells more records or anything like that, but...it just gives a little kick.

Tim: Over in Europe, it was all over the place, but back here, people don't really care anymore.

Ed: That trend has passed.



I think you've established yourself enough.

Ed: I don't know about that...maybe in Europe.

Dan: Yeah, I kinda wish that trend hadn't passed.

I was just wondering about this, I know it seems like there have been some reunions creeping up. Obviously like Gorilla Biscuits and Burn, and I also caught word of a Cro-Mags reunion...do you guys know if that's...

Dan: I hear it's happening.

Tim: Apparently at Tramps.

Like on March 29th or something...

) what do you guys feel about this though?

Tim: To me, those bands that do a reunion, are pretty much the only bands I like.

I know you guys were probably around to see them the first time.

Tim: For the most part, yeah, those are the bands that I got into, those are the bands that like motivated me to do a hardcore band, those are the bands that pretty much molded my life. I mean, there are a few bands around today that I like, but, for the most part, if I'm going to have a lot of fun at a show, it's going to

be seeing one of those bands. It's unfortunate, at this point a lot of the bands get back together and they haven't held true to anything they've said over the past ten years since they've broken up. I still have fun, so that's all that matters to me.

What are some of everyone's favorite bands playing out now?

Ed: I'd say, Better Than A Thousand, Civ, maybe Ignite.



Tim: In My Eyes are cool.

Dan: I like Orange 9mm, Civ...

Ed: Oh, Shelter, how could we forget them... the new record ["Beyond Planet Earth"] is really good.

I like it... no one else does.

Tim: Basically, the bands I like, that I really like, are bands consisting of...

Dan: ...Members of bands that I did like.

Tim: There's a few new bands like In My Eyes, Floorpunch...

Ed: I'll tell you what...Sportswear...seriously. Pretty good stuff.

Tim: There's some newer bands that I like, most of the bands I like, to me, just... those guys know how to play fuckin' hardcore. They know how to play music in general. It's not so watered down, there are so many bands around who just don't know the first thing

about hardcore, and try to play it and it's just watered down bullshit. There are some people who do know what it's about... I'll give everybody a chance, I just usually end up liking a handful of bands.

That's about all I have, do you guys have anything

in closing? Like future plans or whatever?

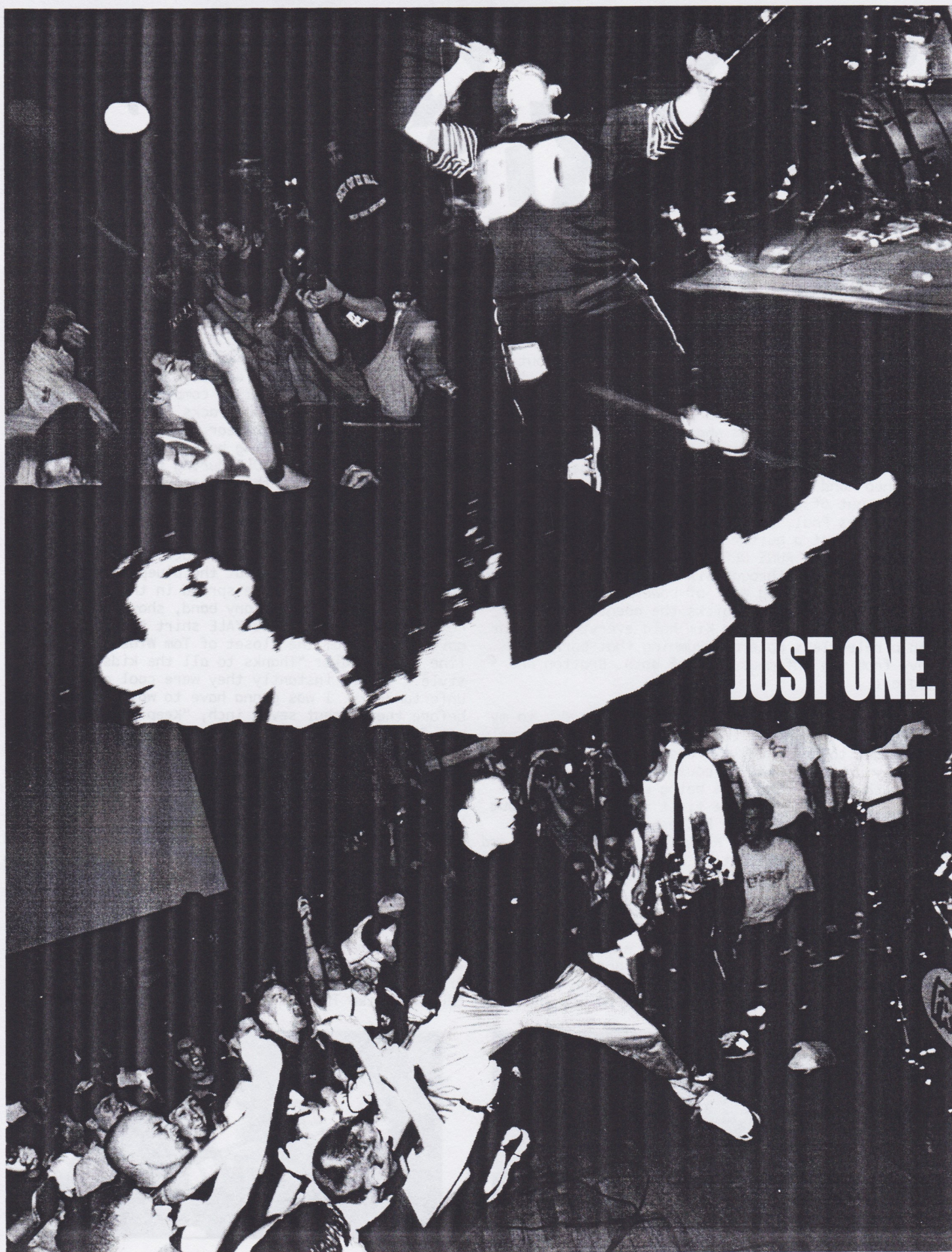
(Ed rips excruciating ass, everyone steps outside the car. Two minutes later...)

All right!

Ed: Keep it together, stay straight. Go vegetarian, seriously. I'm not joking around now.

**XXX**





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# SPORTSWEAR

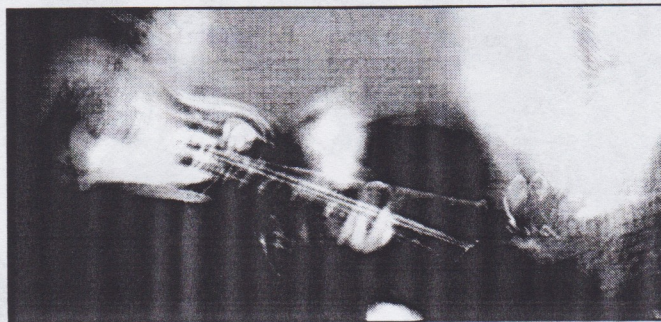
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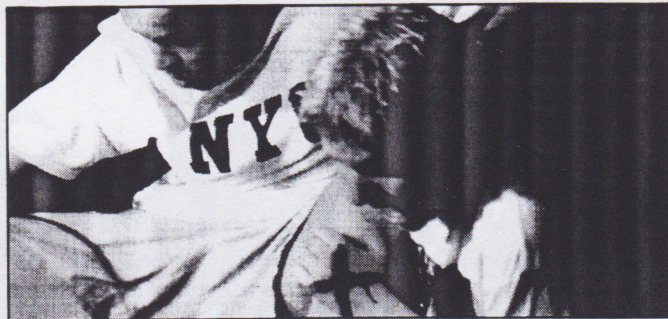
I honestly don't know where to start when talking about this band. So many people took shots at them, so many people wouldn't take them seriously, so many people thought they were just plain, bad. The fact of the matter is that this band created such a stir in my soul that I don't know if I will ever be able to shake it free. I don't feel like I missed out on very much during my time spent being involved with hardcore, but if there is one band that I wish I had seen live in the past 6 years, it would be Sportswear. I can only imagine what it would have been like to have one foot up on the stage... watching Peter Amdam scream "KEEP IT TOGETHER," one outstretched hand in the air, his other hand squeezing the life out of the mic... watching Espen clutch his sunburst Les Paul, extracting the most soul-shattering sounds that a guitar could produce during the breakdown of "IT RUNS DEEP"... while Arne stood to his side, slicing through six more strings of rhythm to create a deafening wall of power... watching Ness control the crowd as he picks the opening lines of "TO BE SINCERE"... watching Kim hold everything tight with a relentless pace of drumming that borrowed heavy from the infamous ways of both, Bratton and Siegler.

But, imagine is all I can do. Maybe that adds to my passion for this band, the simple fact that the only time I got to see them live was in my own mind, mentally creating what it could have been like to hear such sounds that were being amplified only a few feet away from me. The first time I heard about Sportswear was when Espen Follestad came to the states in March of 1997. He was friends with Tim and Ed as well as others that he had known for a few years. He was supposed to be in a new band with members of Onward, the singer to be Onward guitarist, Peter Amdam. The name of the band: Sportswear. Har-Har... I was a "youth crew style hardcore kid" and even I had a hard time taking that name seriously. I knew that Espen had been in Rectify and maybe some other smaller "Euro" bands, but what I had heard from that "genre" at the time didn't do all that

much for me. It just seemed like watered down late 80's hardcore with bad accents. I remember Matt Summers telling me that he had heard some of Sportswear's stuff and that it sounded a lot like Brotherhood. I liked Brotherhood a lot, but I just couldn't fathom that a band named Sportswear could pull it off. Still, there was a buzz about the band and I was anxious to get a listen. Pretty soon, the "FOR THE SAKE OF DEDICATION" compilation came out on Crucial Response, and two tracks I was most eager to hear were those by Sportswear. I was greeted by a raw and unpolished blazing hardcore song that could have been recorded by BOLD during the "Speak Out" sessions and left off the LP because Matt had a hoarse throat and a little bit of a Norwegian accent that day. The next song was a beefed up, raging version of "Can't You See" by who else, but Crippled Youth. The songs were rough, lacked finesse and seemed a little rushed, but the blueprint was there. Meanwhile, their one page spread in the booklet was probably the coolest of any band, showcasing a slick Peter Amdam in a classic YALE shirt that he must have stolen from the closet of Tom Wide Awake. One line said it all: "Thanks to all the kids who know style." I knew instantly they were cool as hell. Unfortunately, I was gonna have to wait a few months before their debut seven inch, "Keep It Together," was finished and in my mailbox to reconfirm my belief in this band. In the meantime, Espen, who had spent the summer and early fall of 1997 in New Jersey playing with Hands Tied, had been forced to return to Norway and tend to the duties of his homeland. Soon enough, the months passed, and a small seven inch package from Crucial Response ended up on my kitchen counter in the fall of 1997. Within moments, the opening bass line to "Keep It Together" was rolling out of my speakers, a wave of high notes soon blasting over top, and riveting floor toms. Again, I wasn't sure if I was hearing a new band or a lost recording of BOLD... however this time it sounded much tighter and polished, possibly lost tracks that were recorded a little bit before the "Running Like Thieves" session? But no... this was in







fact a new band and new songs, from yes, Norway. There was absolutely nothing I could find fault with in that seven inch. It was raging, sincere, soulful, straight edge hardcore that took the best parts of all the classic bands, and added their own fresh sound. The layout was as good as they came, complete with a rendition of the SSD "Kids..." photo on the thanks list page, where they gave praise to Nike, Champion, Bold and Basketball... 4 stellar things in my book. I was hoping there would be a flyer enclosed saying "on tour in the U.S. tomorrow!" ...but there was no such thing.

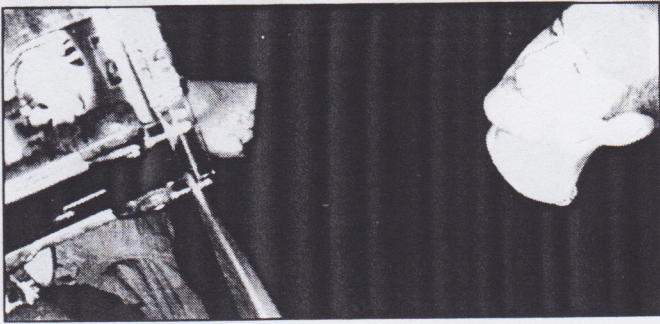
Soon, I was introducing myself to Peter Amdam via e-mail, hoping I could talk him into getting to the U.S., as well as wanting to find out about the guy who was behind such a powerful new band in my life. Our e-mails usually consisted of talk about sneakers, Hands Tied and Floorpunch, the Oslo and Tri-State area scenes, and of course, BOLD. Pete seemed like a really down to earth guy, definitely not the jaded old man that many other 27 year-old dudes in HC often were. Quickly, a very long distance, electronic friendship was formed. In the meantime, material for a second seven inch was already in the works for Crucial Response. Pete told me that the songs were going to more polished and even more powerful, while still having a very hard and introspective feel that was on the heels of the Cro-Mags, later Chain, later YOT, and the later stuff, by who else, but that BOLD band. Around this same time, Hands Tied, Ten Yard Fight, and One King Down were getting ready to embark on the European tour, and Espen would link up to again play with HT. Additionally, Sportswear would play some of these shows, as well as building their following throughout Europe with regular performances throughout the spring and summer of '98. Most notable were their shows during the Better Than A Thousand summer tour through Europe. It was at this time that Ray Cappo himself, really got enthused about the Norwegian powerhouse, and talk about a future release on Cappo's Supersoul Recordings came about. Also, around this time, the

"It Runs Deep" seven inch was recorded, as well as two other songs that would appear on the Supersoul "Rebirth Of Hardcore" compilation. I hounded Amdam in every e-mail about getting dubs of this new material, though it wasn't until that upcoming fall of '98, that I would receive them in the mail along with lyrics. His talk about a more polished and powerful sound was nothing but the truth, and I couldn't believe that they actually had written songs better than what they had for "Keep It Together." The song, "It Runs Deep," was a raging display of emotion and sincerity, with a breakdown that would make Harley Flanagan grin and a solo that might even force Vic Dicara to blink. The three other songs on the seven inch were solid and along the same lines, though not quite as crushing as "It Runs Deep." Even today, I can't find one fault with that song. It is definitely one of my favorite of the 90's, if not of all time. The comp songs were also flawless... simply gut-wrenching, hard-hitting hardcore done the best it could be. As all other Sportswear lyrics, these too had common themes, yet were written with such intelligence, integrity, and conviction, that put most others to shame.

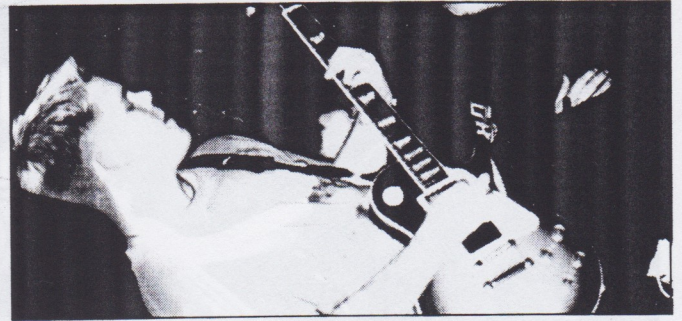
Soon, fall turned into winter, and it wasn't long before the "It Runs Deep" 7" found it's way to my house. Just as the tape had promised, this record was surely no let down. The layout was perfect, with a photo-covered insert revealing all the intensity that I imagined a Sportswear show to incorporate. The Supersoul comp came out around this time as well, and though there were many stand-out songs, I felt that the Sportswear songs didn't budge for anyone. Throughout the fall, Amdam had confirmed to me that they would in fact be coming to NYC in very early 1999 to record at Don Fury's with Cappo for an LP to be released on Supersoul. Best of all, they hoped to play shows on the east coast! I had a pipe dream of doing a show in my town with them and Floorpunch, maybe rounding out the bill with Rain On The Parade and Parting Shot. However, I realized that I would actually need a venue to perform such a





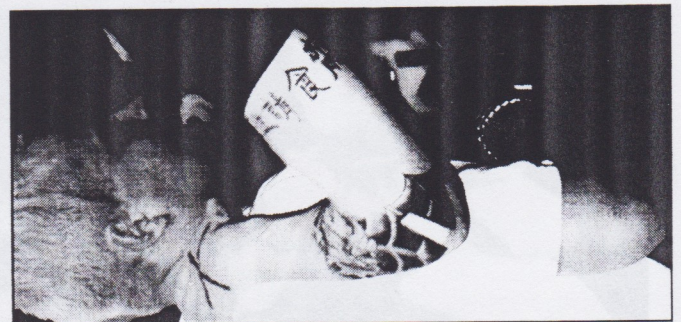


feat, and that didn't exist in my town. Sportswear decided to scratch the playing out idea anyways to focus on ten days of non-stop recording, which would become the "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" LP. Pete had told me that he would try to get in touch during those days to meet up, but their time was limited and we weren't able to. Soon after returning home, the life of Sportswear was quickly altered. A lot of what happened were personal issues involving Amdam that don't need mention, but he fell on some hard times and in the mix of it all, he stopped being straight edge. Many were outraged and confused, but I think almost everyone who cared, knew that the future of Sportswear looked pretty bleak. With this onset, my communication with Amdam became less frequent, and it was hard not to believe whatever was floating around the internet about the situation, especially not having been in good enough contact to have him clarify what was happening. I basically looked at it as a shame that such an amazing band had gone down the tubes, due to whatever was happening in his personal life or with group conflicts. They were the only hardcore band at the time that really, still got me charged up, and when I discovered it was over for them, a part of me lost interest in everything else, as well. Sure there were still some great bands, good shows, and cool kids, but I looked at Sportswear as something to constantly be looking forward to. Suddenly, they became something to look back upon. I didn't know what was going to happen with the LP, and it didn't seem that anyone else did either. I had never even acquired a dub of it. It wasn't until a year later that I knew of it's existence, when Pete (again, Impact that is) told me he saw it at Double Decker but didn't have the money for it. I couldn't even believe it! It existed and I had no idea! A week later at a show I was able to see it with my own eyes, a CD copy of all new Sportswear songs, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking." The photos showed all the things I had presumed synonymous with this band: Explosive energy, giant crowd participation, and of course, style. The music picked up where "It Runs

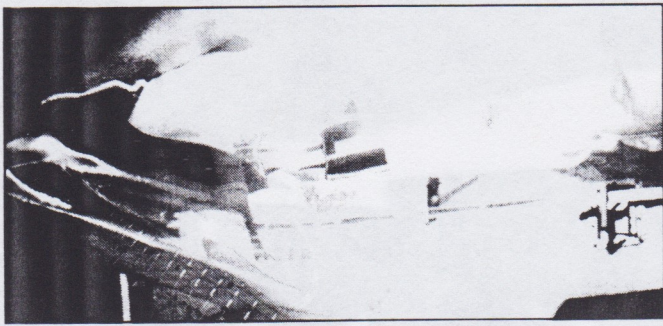


Deep" left off, but now with a bigger, Don Fury production that even makes "Bringin' It Down" sound a bit tame. The opening song, in true Sportswear tradition, is the cream of the crop. "Time To Try" kicks things off with a sound bigger than my ear canals can handle, and doesn't let up until the final scream of "DAAAAYYYYYYYSOOW!" trails off into silence on the final track. Though the production still, somehow manages to surpass the prior recordings, I still think that some of the songs on here weren't up to the Sportswear standard. Still, the majority of them couldn't be any better, and the rest are still solid hardcore. It made me wish that somehow, things had worked out back in Norway and The Wear was on the way to the states for a full U.S. tour, inviting me along as a roadie. I got back in touch with Amdam, only to find that such a thing surely wasn't happening, as conflicts had arisen between band members after the break-up, and even he, himself, had seen better days. We were definitely on different levels, me being a 17 year-old high school kid clinging to the hope that Sportswear would get back together, and him, a 30 year-old guy just trying to sort out some major issues in his life. Needless to say, our e-mails were pretty sporadic. But, the music never strayed very far from my ears... and if I wanted to hear to the hardest, most awe-inspiring band in recent memory, and there are a few to compete with them, I'd play Sportswear.

Today, I have been back in touch with Amdam on a regular basis, like we never missed a beat. And though Sportswear surely doesn't seem to be practicing for reunion shows, he is one of the coolest guys I have ever known, even if only through a computer. A very dignified man once said, "You can steal our equipment, you can talk your shit about us, you can take our records and knock our lives, but you can't take our spirit." Though that man might not have been Peter Amdam, and he wasn't talking about Sportswear, he might as well have been.







Originally, IMPACT Online had an interview with Sportswear that was done by Simon Philips from the UK for his own 'zine, "Cast Aside." It was a pretty cool interview, though a little short, done with Pete Amdam in early 1998. That interview was going to be used... until Amdam sent me this one, an interview, conducted shortly after the demise of Sportswear, intended for a Swedish zine that never surfaced, by an author unknown. I thought this was a great look back at Sportswear. In Amdam's own words... "IT RUNS DEEP."

#### Begin with a history of Sportswear?

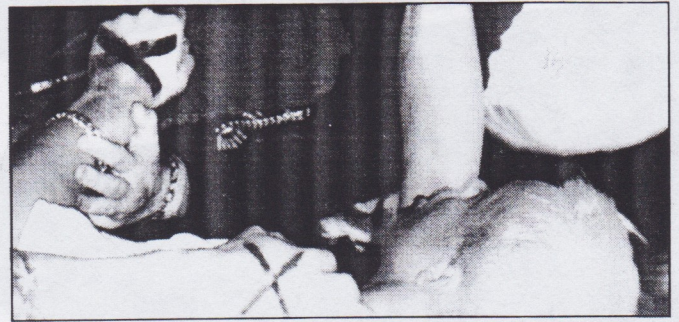
Me (Pete/Onward), Espen (Rectify), Arne (Onward) and Kim (Rectify), decided to jam and I insisted on singing. We were playing old hardcore songs we loved. Sportswear played it's first show in late May of 1996. That was, in a way, a "pre-historic" show as the band had one practice and had no songs on it's own. However, the line-up worked out really well, there was a real good chemistry going on, and we decided to try doing this thing as a serious band. Rectify broke up, and Onward had not too much time on their hands. So, by November of 1996, Sportswear was no longer a project, but a serious band, and mine and Espen's main focus in hardcore.

#### The last lineup?

Pete-vocals, Espen-guitar, Arne-bass, Kim-drums. We were about to add Daniel from Eyeball on rhythm guitar, after the Floorpunch tour, but that never happened.

#### Discography?

\*For The Sake Of Dedication comp, Crucial Response. Two songs: "The Sake Of Dedication," "Can't You See" (Crippled Youth). \*Keep It Together 7" EP, Crucial Response. \*It Runs Deep 7" EP, Crucial Response.



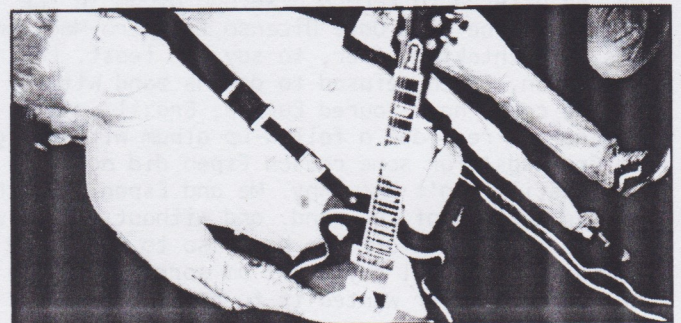
\*The Rebirth Of Hardcore: 1999 comp, Supersoul Recordings. Two songs: "Wash Away," "With Clear Minds." \*Sportswear "s/t" CD, Crucial Response. Contains both seven inches and previously unreleased cover version of "S.E. Pride" by Gain. \*Building, Dwelling, Thinking LP on vinyl, licensed to Good Life in Europe. Has two cover songs, Abused "Drug Free Youth" and DYS "City To City," both not appearing on the CD version. \*Building, Dwelling, Thinking CD, American version on Supersoul. Interactive, and includes the song "Reminisce" (featuring Ray Cappo) that is not on the vinyl.

#### Member changes?

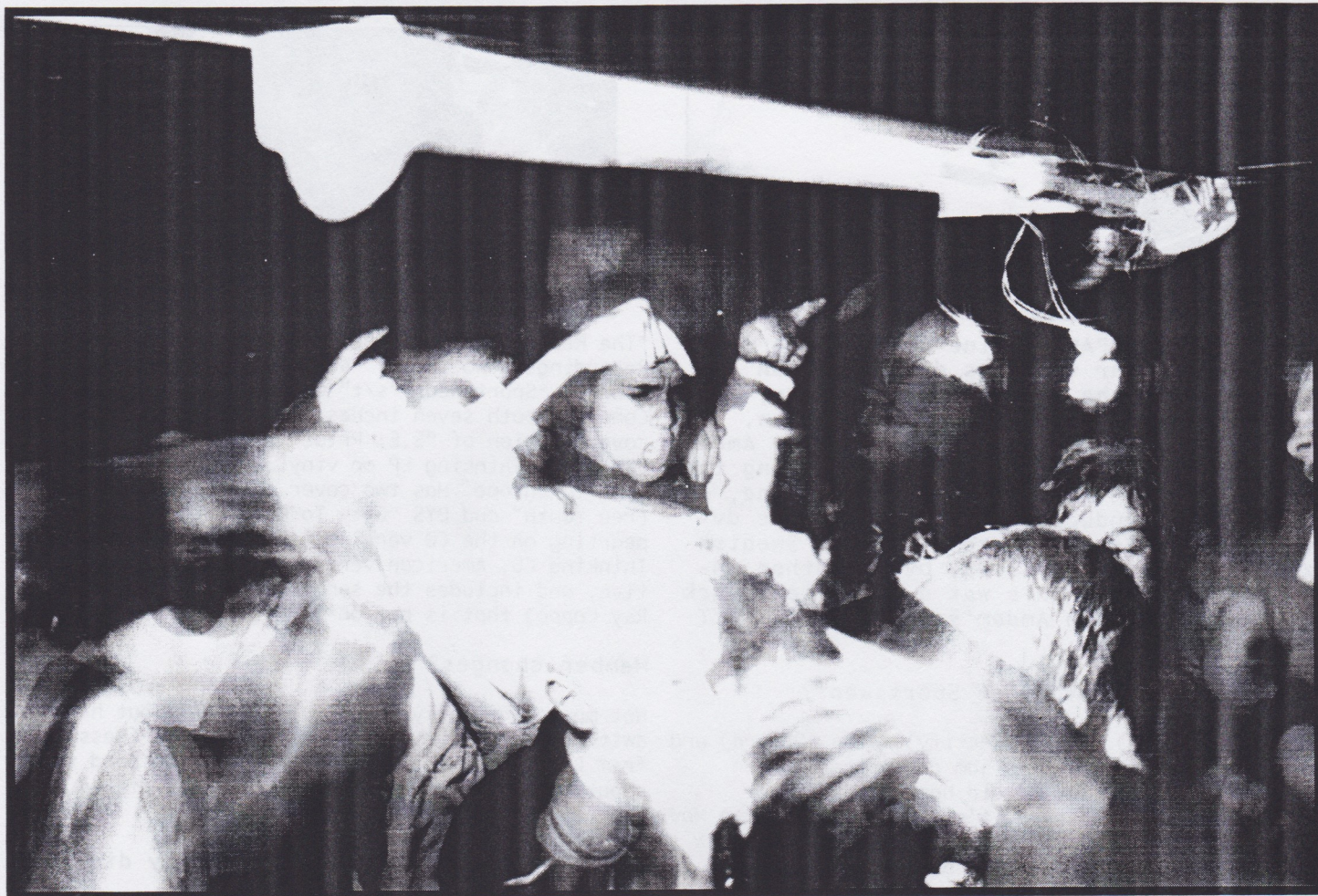
Not many. Initially, Espen played bass, but he switched to guitar. For a while, Bjørnar (Ness), from Lash Out played bass. He was in the band for about eight months. After Bjørnar, Arne picked up the four stringer.

#### Ok, let's get started. First, why did you split up?

Hmmm... it's a long and complicated story really. I guess I was the one who started it. I am not straight edge anymore. Why? It's a personal story, but I'll give you some pieces of my life... When I returned last winter from NYC and the Floorpunch tour, I found my real life in ruins. A lot of personal things happened in my life, and it was a very dark and depressing time. My studies went to hell. I became disillusioned with everything, especially myself. I fell into a state of real deep depression. I couldn't eat or sleep for weeks. Drinking was a way to cope with depression. Maybe it was a copout, but it didn't matter. I had to do something. What straight edge kids around the world might think wasn't exactly an issue. During the years I had also came to the thinking that it is the caring spirit of straight edge that is so precious and not the rigid adherence to principles. Well, all that stuff about me quitting the edge caused alot of ruckus. Some







friends came up and gave me what I needed at that time, a hand to hold, some gave me words of rejection. Whatever. Things cooled down, and we had a big band meeting when Cappo came to town with Better Than A Thousand. There was a lot of talking back and forth. At the end of the meeting the standing was like this: Me, Espen and Cappo really wanted to continue Sportswear. The music was great, the message was still very valid (we only had one S.E. song, "The Sake Of Dedication"). Arne was positive, but he needed "some time to think about it." Kim said that he never cared about straight edge and that he never cared about our message, he even confessed that he had never read one of my lyrics. Still, he didn't want to be in the band with me because I was not straight edge anymore. His argument did not make sense, but whatever. After the meeting, Cappo told me and Espen that we should go on without Kim. Youth Of Today had eighteen drummers, Shelter 30. He could get us a tour-drummer any time. He offered to record a second album in the U.S., and maybe with Dave Dicenso from Cro-Mags on drums. Breathtaking offer, to say the least. For some reason, Espen refused to do the band without Kim. We could have toured Europe, Brazil, and America, and recorded a follow-up album with the guy from Cro-Mags! For some reason Espen did not want that. I still don't know why. Me and Espen were the creative nucleus of the band, and without him it was hard for me to re-start the band, so to speak. My life was in upheaval anyway. I am sorry it ended like that. I never wanted it to happen.

**Is a reunion show or something possible in the future?**

I hope so. We never played any shows after the LP came out. I really want to do it. I want to do the band. I know Arne wants to do a reunion show or two. It's up to the other guys I guess.

**How is the Norwegian scene now?**

Well, you are speaking to the person Peter Amdam right now and not some official scene reporter. I do not like the Norwegian hardcore scene as it is right now. It's in a sorry state. There's only two bands that do anything for me. First, there is Subject To Change; they're actually from Sweden, but my good friend Erik Anarchy from Oslo sings for them, so for the sake of dedication, I will list that band. Second, there is Insurance Risk. I'm still not sure whether to take those guys seriously ...but I love those people and their music is classic and rough hardcore. I might not be in the right position to make statements about the Norwegian scene, but the last shows I've been to almost brought me to tears. Hardcore has become just another style of music, no one is saying anything that matters. No one cares. I wouldn't describe the last shows I've been to as "inspired dive-fests." Screamo and emo seems to be big. Tough guy, too. Bands are either into being carefree, hateful, or funny. I was never into that. The Norwegian scene is at a lowpoint... hopefully something good will emerge out of the ashes, but I have problems seeing where it should come from.



Anarchy is putting out a fanzine that I'm writing for that tries to keep our vision of hardcore alive. Surviving death, so to speak.

**Do you think the scene in Norway has become weaker after that SPORTSWEAR split up?**

Well, it's hard to answer this question without sounding like some egomaniac. Weaker...? I think it is. A lot of people say so. There's less shows, less kids, and no bands with a message. If this has ANYTHING to do with Sportswear's absence, I wouldn't know. What I tried to do "scene-wise" with Sportswear was to create a good, caring, creative, and inspirational scene. I tried to cultivate a scene that embraced a spirit of change and soulfulness. To me, the scene is not like that anymore. If it's because Sportswear is not around, I can't tell. If you say that the scene has become weaker after the demise of Sportsear, it would be both flattering and sad.

**Are you doing any other bands now?**

I am not in any other bands. Neither is Arne. Kim and Espen are in bands.

**Any new projects?**

I am trying to get together a band that will be called SINCERITY. It will be Sportswear style hardcore. Late sportswear. Maybe with a tad more Cro-Mags and Raw Deal influences. It will be a

serious thing with really serious and soulful lyrics. Hard knock music. I am recording a single for Crucial Response this summer. I haven't found any members yet, but I will have two friends of mine, musician guys (they're in a famous norwegian rock band), to play the instruments. I write the music and lyrics and I will sing.

**Of your releases, which one are you most happy with?**

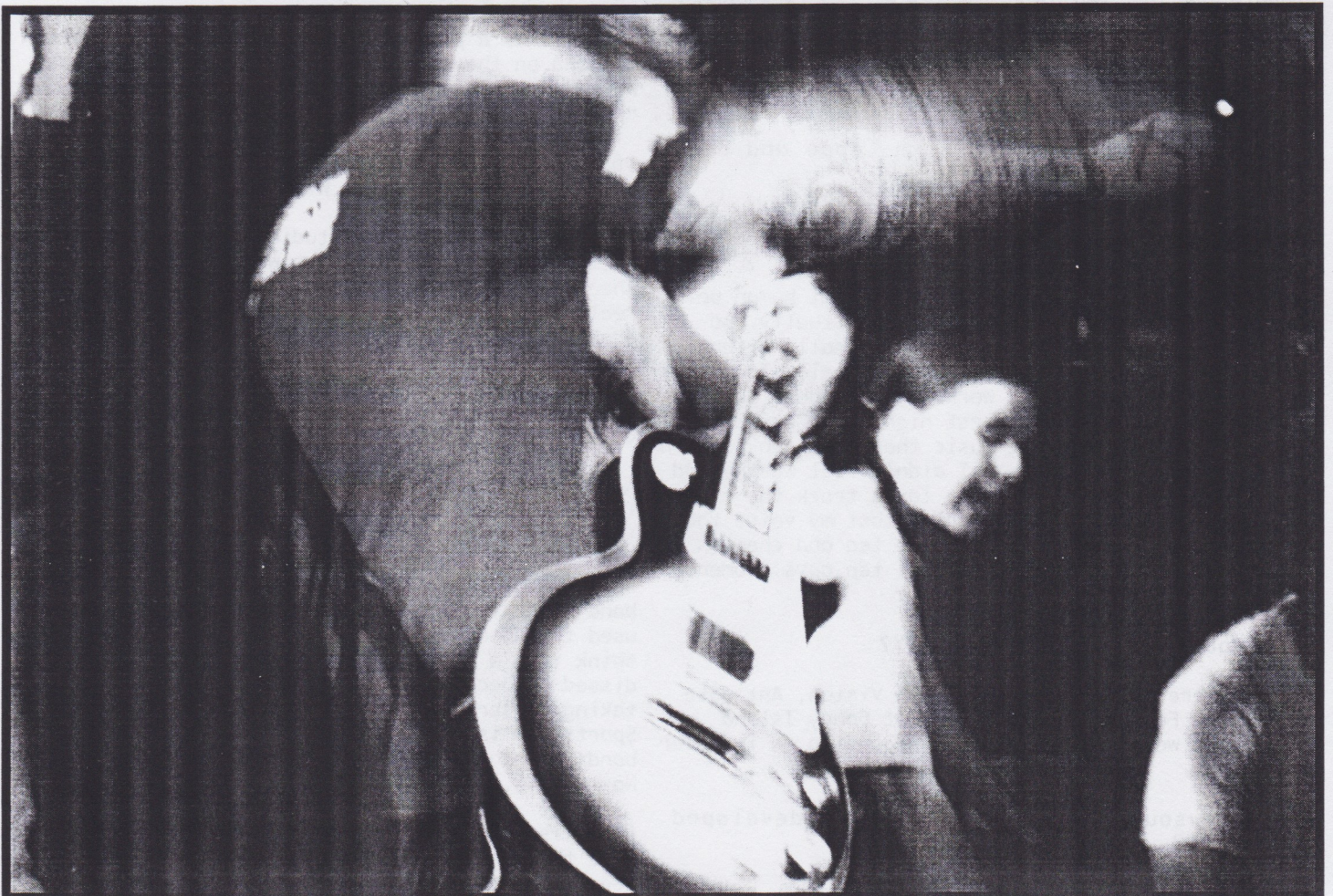
I think our album is the best thing we ever put out. It's the most evolved Sportswear product, it's an album where we're doing our own thing to the fullest. It's the only release where I am almost 100% satisfied with my vocals. I also like "It Runs Deep" a lot because of the layout and the quality of the few songs included. But, the album... I'm awfully proud of it.

**How did you come in contact with Crucial Response?**

I've been friends with Crucial Pete since 1990 and we have been working closely together ever since. So it was no question of hooking up with Sportswear really, it was just natural. We always believed in the same things, Pete and me.

**The Cappo/Pete picture. That one was taken in Sweden at Vänerrocken, wasn't it?**

Yes it was. We were hanging out after the Better





Than A Thousand set. Espen's girlfriend shot it. I am a nerd and I thought it was cool to have my picture taken with Ray.

**The new record on Good Life... please comment on that release.**

Well, the vinyl came out on Good Life. Edward bought the licensing right for the vinyl in Europe from Ray. We didn't have too much to do with that. I don't know how he is doing with the record. The colored vinyl, especially the yellow one is a little rare it seems. That's cool.

**Whose idea was it to record it in New York, and what can you tell me about that trip?**

When we signed to Supersoul we were discussing with Cappo where to record it and how. We were talking about Ray coming to Norway to produce it. After a while, Ray called me and said, "Fuck it! We're going into Fury's!" The trip to NYC was awesome. To me it was like a dream come true, recording at the legendary Don Fury's studio. I was completely awe-struck when I got into that place, seeing all those record covers hanging on the walls... Cro-Mags, YOT, Gorilla Biscuits tags all over the place. I had a blast. I even got interviewed by Details magazine and Newsweek when we were recording. We were hanging out with Tim McMahon from Jersey. We hung out with Chris and the guys from One Sided War. We met the guys from Antidote. The guys from BOLD. Gus Straight Edge. I love NYC... it's a fantastic city. Me, our roadie Tom, and Daly went to see Big Punisher and the Terror Squad. He was the greatest rapper and I feel like a part of music history after that trip. I recorded at Don Fury. I saw Big Pun in concert. Yeeeah baby! Big Pun RIP.

**How was the cooperation with Cappo and Don Fury?**

Working with those two guys was truly inspiring. I had a lot to do with Ray because he was producing the vocals. Fury was working more with the instruments. To me, Cappo is a wonderful human being and I learned a lot from him both spiritually and musically. Fury is a supercool guy, really friendly and enthusiastic, and he is funny as hell. To me, as a singer, it was perfect working with those guys. I was scared shitless the first night... I was thinking about all that great music that has been made in that Manhattan-basement... I didn't feel worthy and I got psyched out. I tried to lay a track the first night and I sucked really bad, I lost my voice that night. I had to drink throat-coat tea and chew on licorice root constantly the next ten days. Somehow it worked out.

**Did you make any shows in NY?**

No. We were supposed to play with Vision, Antidote and Where Fear And Weapons Meet at Coney Island High. But we were stressed out recording so it never happened.

**Has the sound of your last record developed somewhat?**

It is basically the same sound. It's really really

hard. I think my vocals developed a little. I do a lot more varied stuff. I'm not going big all the time... I actually almost sing a little in parts to make the screaming style even more effective. Musically, it's more technically evolved, tighter arrangements, guitar solos and stuff like that. We even have two slow songs on it, which is something we never did prior to that record. I think it safe to say that the musicianship is a lot tighter on this record. That goes for all four of us.

**How did you come in contact with Hans and the GL crew? And how's the work been together with them?**

As I said above, Edward bought the rights to the vinyl from Ray. I have known Hans since he was in Rise Above, though. We became good friends when Onward and Blindfold toured back in '92.

**The title, "Building, Dwelling, Thinking." What do you mean with that one?**

It is the title of a famous Martin Heidegger (German philosopher) essay on the poetry of Hölderlin and Rilke. To me, as an album title, it has a lot to do with trying to create a space in which one can cultivate thoughtful and caring ideas. It is about my conception of hardcore. You try to build... you dwell in it... it gives you inspiration to do serious thinking.

**Ray is singing in some songs, isn't he?**

Yup. He was a part of the backup choir. He's also singing on the song called "Desperate Minds," as well as on the song I mentioned earlier, "Reminesce."

**Don Fury's must be a very good studio since you traveled all the way to USA to record?**

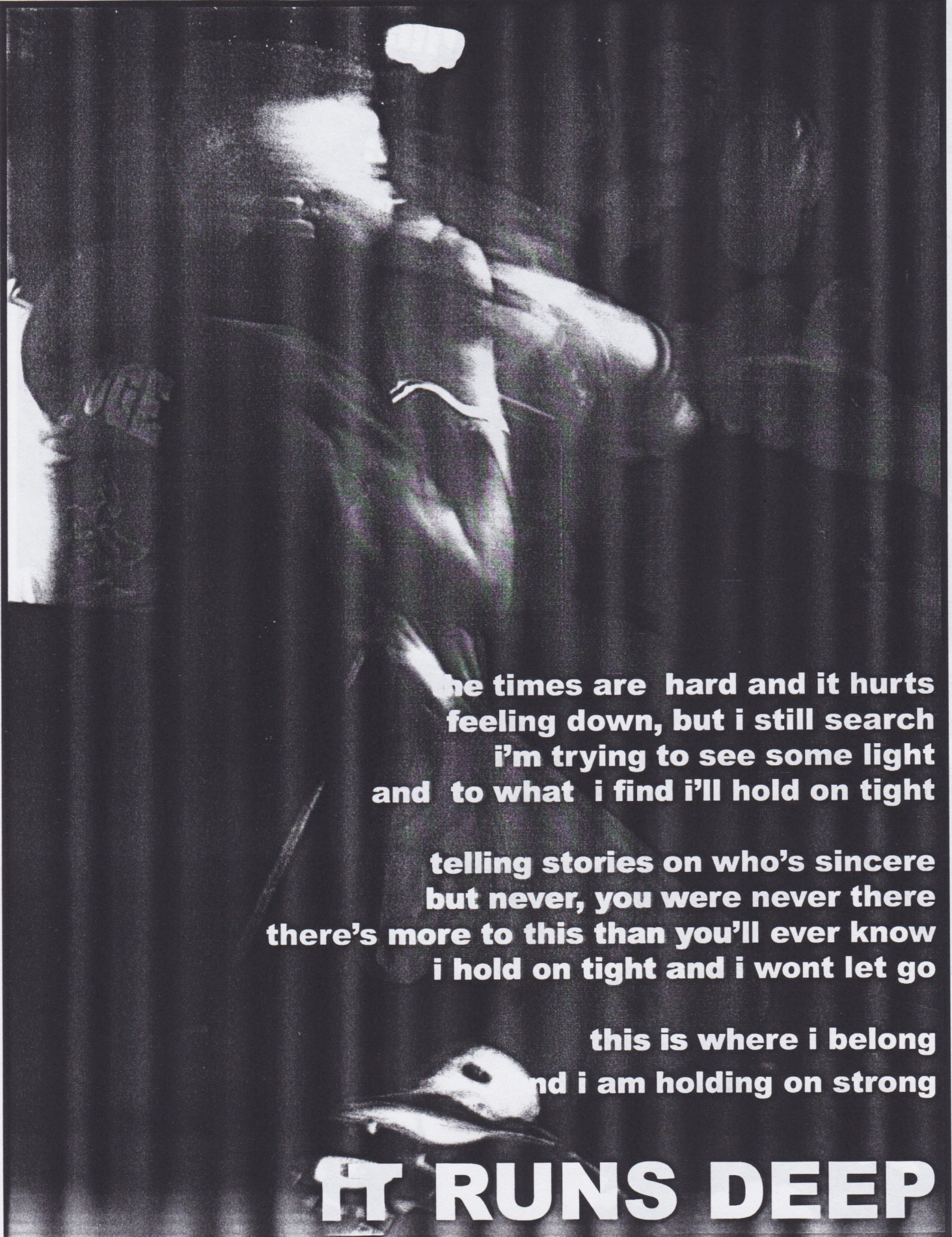
It is a very, very good studio. I was like a little child on New Year's Eve when we got the chance to go there. Going to the U.S. is always a good thing. I really want to go back, but right now I am dead broke so it's not something that will happen very soon I am afraid.

**Does "SPORTSWEAR" refer to youth crew or do you like sports a lot too?**

Actually, I'm not that into sports. I came up with the name though. I don't know if you remember, but there was a pop band called Menswear a couple of years ago. I thought that Sportswear would be a really good "youth crew" hardcore version of that band name. You know... straight edge kids always used to run around in Sportswear. I don't know... I think it's a good and catchy name. A lot of people dissed us because of the name and had a hard time taking us seriously. That is regretful because Sportswear is a 100% serious band. A lot of good bands had nonsense names... Gorilla Biscuits, Dag Nasty, DYS, etc.

[This is the abrupt end of this interview, and much like the band, it is over before it should have been. Sportswear RIP.]





**the times are hard and it hurts  
feeling down, but i still search  
i'm trying to see some light  
and to what i find i'll hold on tight**

**telling stories on who's sincere  
but never, you were never there  
there's more to this than you'll ever know  
i hold on tight and i wont let go**

**this is where i belong  
and i am holding on strong**

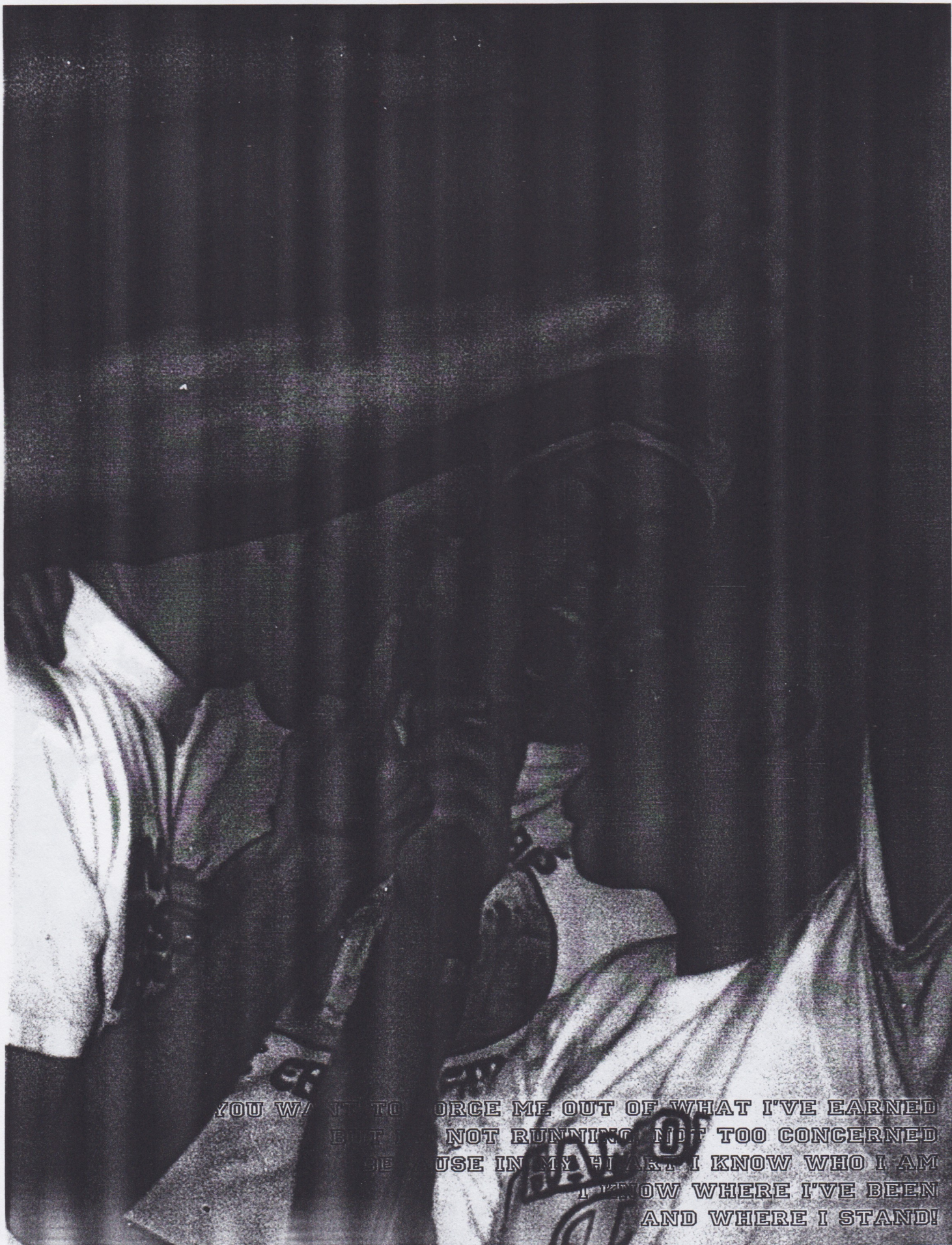
**IT RUNS DEEP**



they tried to break me  
they couldn't get to me  
they'll never get to me  
you can't break me.







YOU WANT TO FORCE ME OUT OF WHAT I'VE EARNED  
BUT I'M NOT RUNNING NOT TOO CONCERNED  
BECAUSE IN MY HEART I KNOW WHO I AM  
I KNOW WHERE I'VE BEEN  
AND WHERE I STAND!

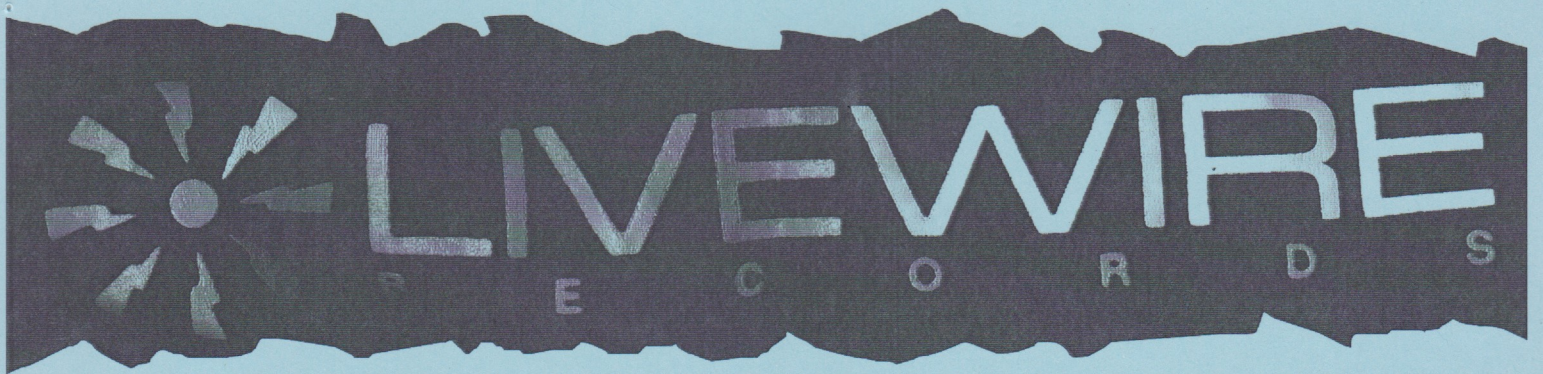


this is the wood, the fuel  
and spark of a whole stagnant  
movement and together we're  
gonna find a match...





HOLDIN' IT DOWN AT POSI-NUMBERS 2002 AND BEYOND...



HOME OF RUNNING LIKE THIEVES, FACE THE ENEMY AND THE FIRST STEP, Y'ALL.



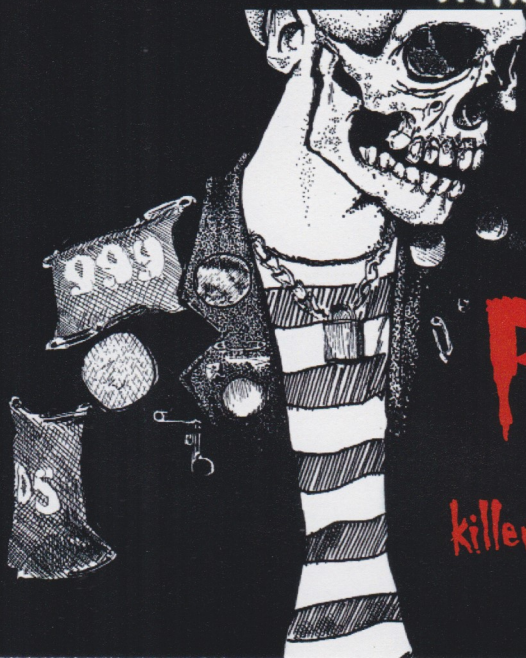




bang bang bang



...i'm a streetangel, baby.



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